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THE
BOOKS
OPENED.
[The substance of]
Being several
DISCOURSES
on REV. 20. 14.

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The EPISTLE to the Reader.

Christian Reader ;

THere are two things which if firmly believed and duly considered, would have a great Influence upon Men and Womens Lives, viz. First, That they are mortal. Secondly, Accountable Creatures. It is the indispensable Statute-Law of Heaven that never will be repealed or dispensed withal, Heb. 9. 27. Death is a Debt which all Men owe, and how soon the great Creditor may exact it, none can tell : We are all here as Tenants at Will in Cottages of Clay, whose Foundation is in the Dust. These earthly Tabernacles are continually mouldring down about our Ears, do what we can by Food and Physick to patch them up for a little while. There is no Man liveth, and shall not see Death. And Death hath always Judgment attending at the very Heels of it. And as the Tree falls, so it lies : As Death leaves us, Judgment will find us. And as it is with us when we go out of this World, so it will fare with us for ever.

This short uncertain Life we have here is the only time of Preparation we have for another World. Death sets Men on the other side the Water, there will be no working there, no praying nor repenting, and believing, and seeking to get our Sins pardoned, and an Interest in Christ, and a Right to Heaven: if this Work be to be done then, we shall be undone to all Eternity. If we once die in a Christless and graceless Condition, we shall perish for being so to all Eternity. There will be no Time then to correct former Mistakes. At Death we must all appear before an impartial Judge, to receive our final conclusive determining Sentence to a fixed eternal unchangeable State of Misery or Happiness in another World. And things will then appear quite otherwise than they were stated, and did appear here. Then all Vizards and Masks will be pluck'd off, and naked Breasts will be in fashion: What hath been here concealed, will then be made manifest: what hath been spoken in secret, will then be told on the House-top: Nothing hid but shall then be made manifest. At this opening Day there will be a Manifestation of the Sons of God: then all
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to the Reader.

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the Sincerity and secret Graces and Holiness of Believers will be openly declared, and all those Marks and Evidences of the Truth of Grace, (which here are often clouded and obscured) will evidently appear: And all the secret Wickedness and Hypocrisy, and False-heartedness of Unbelievers, will then be discovered and laid open. And the Apostle lets us know what an Influence (the Belief and Consideration of) this had upon himself, and other Ministers of the Gospel, to quicken them to Diligence and Faithfulness in their Ministerial Function: 2 Cor. 5. 9, 10. We must all appear; 1st. [All], without Exception, High and Low, Rich and Poor, Young and Old, Ministers and People; there will be no declining or escaping of it. 2dly. [All], in our own Persons, without a Proxy; there will be no hiring of another to appear for us, every one of us must give an Account of himself to God, Rom. 14. 12.

Now the great Design of the worthy Reverend Author in these ensuing Sermons, is to quicken and direct Persons to prepare and make ready for this opening Day. And herein he shews himself a skilful Workman that needeth not to be ashamed, dividing

vi The EPISTLE, &c.

the Word of Truth aright, and giving to every one their Portion. He doth not put the two-edged Sword of the Spirit into a silken Scabbard, and flourish it in the Air; but dexterously weilds it that it might reach the Consciences of Men: he speaks plainly but pertinently and substantially; his Words are not only intelligible, but also penetrating. And tho these plain Discourses are posthumous, (and want the ~~polishing~~ that he was able to have given them, had he designed them for the Press) yet they are genuine, copied from his own Notes: and you have the truest Character of him in the constant Course of his Preaching amongst his People. Some serious Christians that were affected with them themselves, have desired to have them printed, that others might share in the like Benefit with them. And that thy Heart may be warmed (as others have been upon the reading of them) and thou be quickened and helped in this Preparation for the great opening Day, as it was the Design of the Author in preaching of them, so it is of others in the publishing them, and of none more than of one of the meanest and unworthiest of Christ's Ministers,

T H E
B O O K S O p e n e d .

R E V . x x . 1 2 .

And I saw the Dead, small and great, stand before God; and the Books were opened: and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life: and the Dead were judged out of those things which were written in the Books, according to their Works.

TH E Apostle Paul tells us, that we must all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his Body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad, 2 Cor. 5. 10. Of this Judgment to come, and which we must all come unto, we have a Description in this part of Sacred Writ, as it was shewed unto John in a Vision; where are set forth,

1. The Person of the Judg, ver. 11. who is described,

A 4

(1.) By

(1.) By his Posture, *Sitting* ; the ordinary Posture of Judges in the Administration of Justice and Judgment, and a Token of Dominion and Authority.

(2.) By the Place where he sat, *a great white Throne* : Not in a Manger, as at his first Coming ; not on the Ground, as when in Flesh he dwelt amongst us ; nor on a Cross, as at his leaving the World, but on a great white Throne.

He that lay in a Manger, that stood at Man's Bar falsely accused, and wickedly condemned ; he that hung upon the Tree, shall sit supreme Judge ; *Sedebit Judex qui stetit sub Judice*. What this Throne is, or of what it shall be made, (tho some say the Angels, others a glorious Rainbow, others a bright Cloud) Scripture being silent, you must not know of me.

(3.) By his Power and Glory. *From whose Face the Earth and the Heaven fled away, and there was found no Place for them*. At his first Appearance *Herod* seeking his Life, he is forced to fly, *Mat. 2. 14*. At his second and glorious Coming, Heaven and Earth shall flee away, not being able to abide his Majesty and Power.

2. The Persons to be judged ; *ver. 12. And I saw the Dead, small and great, stand before God* : the Dead of all sorts and degrees. We must here include those that shall be found alive at this day, who shall pass through a Change that shall be to them instead of Death.

3. The

3. The Form of this Judgment; the manner how the Judg shall proceed, viz. by Books that shall be opened.

4. Sentence is pass'd on the Parties brought to Judgment according to what is found written in the Books when thus opened: *And the Dead were judged out of these things which were written in the Books according to their Works.*

5. The Execution of this Sentence; ver. 14, 15. *And Death and Hell were cast into the Lake of Fire: This is the second Death. And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life, was cast into the Lake of Fire.*

The Words which are the Subject of the ensuing Discourse, contain in them the third Particular in this Description, sc. the manner of Process in this great Work, *the Books shall be opened.*

The word *Book* is in Scripture us'd;

1. Properly, for a Volume wherein something is written; or for the things writ in that Volume; *Isa. 30. 8. Luke 4. 17. Gal. 3. 10.*

2. Improperly and metaphorically, for the certain Knowledge and Remembrance that one hath of a Person or Matter; and all the Circumstances thereto belonging; *Mal. 3. 16. Then they that feared the Lord, spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkned and heard it, and a Book of Remembrance was written before him.* According to this twofold Acceptation of the Word,

God is said to have a double Book.

(1.) *Materialis*, i. e. the Bible, which is called *the Book of the Lord*, Isa. 34. 16. Luke 4. 17. the Book containing the Mind, and Will, and Ways of God.

(2.) *Metaphoricus*, which is ascrib'd to him after the manner of Men, who use to note those things in Books that they would preserve the Knowledg of. Thus there is a threefold Book figuratively ascribed to him, viz. 1st. The Book of Providence, which is the certain Knowledg he hath of all Persons, Actions, and Things, with all their Circumstances, *Psal.* 56. 8. & 139. 16. 2^{dly}. The Book of Life, *Rev.* 20. 12. This is the certain Knowledg he hath of the Elect and Reprobate. 3^{dly}. The Book of Universal Judgment, *Dan.* 7. 10. We are not to understand this Phrase literally, as if there should be some material Books produced and opened at this day. No, the Lord hath neither Need nor Use for them. But it must be interpreted metaphorically, as a Form used for the Help of our Understanding, spoken,

1. By way of Allusion to Courts of humane Judicature, into which are brought, and wherein are produced Charges, Accusations, Proofs, Depositions of Witnesses, Confessions of Parties, and all other Writings that contain Matter of Fact relating to such Causes as are to be try'd.

2. To show that the Judgment will be as accurate and particular in the Examination and Trial, and as just in the Determination as if all had been recorded. Nothing shall be omitted, nor the least Circumstance mistaken, but things shall be so equal in themselves, and so manifested to others, as if an exact Register had been kept and then published.

From the Words observe ;

That in the great Day of Judgment the Books shall be opened: or, There is a Day a coming when the Books shall be opened.
The Judgment was set, and the Books were opened, *Dan. 7. 9, 10.*

That this Truth may be prepared for Application, it must be enquired,

I. What Books they are that shall be opened ?

II. What the opening of these Books implies ?

III. Who they are these Books are to be opened about ?

IV. About what are these Books to be opened ?

I. What Books are they that shall be opened ? They are of three sorts, *viz.*
Those

Those wherein, { 1. All things have been recorded.
 2. All things shall be discovered.
 3. All things shall be judged.

First; Those wherein all things have been recorded, and they are;

1. The Book of Divine Omniscience. Here all things stand on Record, and will hence be as certainly known as had they been writ in a Book: for there is not any Creature that is not manifest in his Sight; but all things are naked and open to the Eyes of him with whom we have to do, Heb. 4. 13. His Eyes are upon the Ways of Man, and he seeth all his Goings: There's no Darknes nor Shadow of Death where the Workers of Iniquity may hide themselves, Job 34. 21, 22. He knows our Works, Rev. 2. 13. There is not a Word in our Tongue, but so he knows it, Psal. 139. 4. Here are our Thoughts writ: Thou understandest my Thoughts afar off, v. 2. No Thought can be with-holden from thee, Job 42. 2. Here are the Hearts described: 1 Chron. 28. 9. The Lord searcheth all Hearts, and understandeth all the Imaginations of the Thoughts. The Lord knows, and remembers all the Actions, Thoughts and Words of all Men, and shall make it appear at this day, that he doth so as fully and plainly as if he had kept a Diary from the Beginning of the World to the end thereof, and therein writ in order every particular Action of every individual Man and Woman.

Remember this, God sees thee round about always, can tell all that thou dost; and this Book wherein all is written shall one day be opened!

2. The Book of Conscience, this carries all our Actions in it; *Volumen grande quo omnia conscribuntur*; 'It is a great Volume in which all we do is writ. *Austin* takes that other Book mentioned in the Text to be the Book of Conscience, which is the Book of each Man's Life, wherein all the Passages thereof are recorded. Tho this Interpretation agree not with this Place, yet Conscience is such a Book as he here describes: *Quocunque vadis, ubicunque es, semper Conscientia tua tecum est, &c.* 'Whithersoever thou go, where-ever thou art, thy Conscience is always with thee, carrying in it whatever thou put'st therein, whether good or bad. Conscience is not always speaking nor always chiding, (many have silenced it) but it is always writing; when we are at our Tables, when on our Beds, when we are alone or in Company it keeps an exact Account: and this Book also shall be opened.

Secondly; The Books shall then be opened, whereby all things shall be clearly discovered and attested. These are,

1. The Book of Divine Omniscience. As all things are inclosed herein, so this shall then be opened, and all the things contained in it thereby disclosed. He will
by

by the opening of this make manifest to all, that which is now hid from Men and Angels, and only known to himself. God knows all things, and will make all Men know that he doth so, by setting in order before their Eyes all things at this day; *Psal. 50. 21.*

2. The Book of Conscience. Herein all things are writ; and by the opening hereof shall appear: *Quod in cujusq; Conscientia occultum fuit, id omnibus manifestum fiet.* In this day Conscience shall be enlightened and awakened, Memories shall be rouz'd and strengthned, all past things shall appear new, and come in fresh upon the Sons of Men. Then every Thought of thy Heart, every Word of thy Mouth, every Action of thy Life with the Circumstances thereof; then every Day of Grace, and how thou hast spent it, every Opportunity of doing and getting Good, and how thou hast improv'd it, shall come in as new as that which thou didst the last Day or Hour. Yea, the things that are now gone from thee, (as *Nebuchadnezzar's* Dream from him) and that thou hast forgotten what they were at such a time, in such a Place, among such Company, forty or fifty Years ago, these shall come in and be as livelyly presented to thy view, as when newly acted. O think on this! It is a common Saying, that Conscience is a thousand Witnesses: You carry this Witness in your
your

your own Bosoms; *Noſte diſque ſuum geſtant in pectore teſtem*; which when the opening Day comes, will proclaim all as on the Houſe-top.

3. The Book of Satan's Accuſation: He is called *the Accuſer*, Rev. 12. 10. This is one Part of his Buſineſs now, but he will eſpecially appear to be ſo when he at the Great Day ſhall come with his Register wherein he now inferts our Actions.

There is a Relation of a Demon that appeared at *Maſcon* in *France* in the Houſe of a godly Miniſter, who there ſpoke and acted many things, among which there are theſe two remarkable Stories.

One time the Demon ſpeaking profanely, a grave Divine then preſent religiously rebuked him; to whom he answer'd, Miniſter, you are very holy and ſerious in this Company, you were not ſo when ſinging ſuch a bawdy Song in ſuch a Tavern, which the Demon rehears'd before the Company. This the Divine confeſs'd he did in his Youth; yet when he had forgot it, and perhaps that ever he ſung it, the Devil readily remembers it as if but done that Day. The other is of a Lawyer who came out of Curioſity, and would urge ſeveral Questions, which when the Demon had answered, he further adds, Now Sir I have told you what you demanded, I muſt next tell you what you demand not, and then diſcovered many of his unequal Dealings, which

which made him appear to be a dishonest Man. The Devil is a busy Body, present at our Tables, at our Recreations, with us in the Shop, in the Market, and Field, with us in solemn Assemblies, with us when engaged in private and secret Duties, ever spying and listening to see and hear what we do or say: no Place is so secret, we cannot act so privately but his piercing Eye will find us out, and he hath a sure Memory which will not permit any thing we do to pass in Oblivion; he will certainly when this opening Day comes, produce such a Catalogue of the Sinners Works as they little think of; he will bring his Bill of their Ways, as the Patriarchs brought Joseph's Coat to Jacob, saying, Is not this the Coat of thy Son? so is not this, Sinners, the Coat of your Christian Profession which you have here spotted with Oaths, there with Drunkenness, in another Place with Uncleaness, and all over with variety of Transgressions?

4. The Book of Human Testification, or Sinners mutual Accusations. Now many Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants, are leading one another into Temptations: Then they shall accuse and witness against each other, as our Saviour says in another Case, Luke 12. 52, 53. *The Father shall be divided against the Son, and the Son against the Father; the Mother against the Daughter, and*
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the Daughter against the Mother. So at this great Day, *A Man's Foes shall be those of his own Household*, Matth. 10. 36. Parents shall rise against their own Children, Children shall rise against their Parents; then Masters shall witness against their Servants, and Servants against their Masters. O the Cries, the Complaints that will be of Husbands, Wives, Children, Servants of the same House against each other! A young Man going to execution, desired to speak with his Mother in the Ear, but instead of whispering bit off her Ear, complaining of her as the promoter of his Death, because she did not in his Youth chastise him for his Faults, but by her fond Indulgence imboldened him in his Wickedness. Thus at the opening Day Children will appear against their Parents; Lord, these Parents were instrumental to bring me into the World, but they were also my Souls Murderers, training me up in Ignorance, teaching me by their Example to lie, swear, and steal, and suffering me to be vile and profane. Parents will at the great Assizes appear against Children; Lord, this Child was Stubborn, Rebellious, Untractable. Servants shall give Testimony against Masters, Lord, we were so long in such a Family, but never saw any thing of Religion in it; we sat down and rose up from our Tables like Brutes, we never knew what it was to have

have the Doors shut in the Evening, nor opened in the Morning with the Key of Prayer, and reading of the Scriptures. *Sic, sic in Domo propria habeo Accusatores, Testes, Judices, & Tortores.* Bern. "Thus, thus, says one, "I have in my own House, Accusers, "Witnesses, Judges, and Tormentors! When you are tempted to sin by Relations and Neighbours, say as the Man to *Joab*, when reprov'd for not killing *Abraham*, 2 Sam. 18. 11, 12, 13. *There is no Matter hid from the King, and thou thy self wouldst have set thy self against me.* So the King, even the King of Kings, hath commanded that we abstain from Sin and from the appearance of Evil; and if I should break his Command, it cannot be hid from his omniscient Eye; nay, you who now tempt, will in the great Day accuse me.

5. The Book of the Creature. It's said of the wicked Man; Job 26. 27. *That the Heavens shall reveal his Iniquity, and the Earth shall rise up against him.* All the Creatures shall by their common Testimony disclose his Wickedness: Ver. 28. *The increase of his House shall depart.* The Vulgar renders it, *Apertum erit germen Domus ipsius*, the Branch of his House shall be opened. Upon which *Sanctius* making these words explicatory of the foregoing Verse, thus glosses, viz. "The Heaven and the Earth "shall reveal his Iniquities, by discovering
"whence,

“ whence, how, and by what means his
“ Branch hath grown, his Increase hath
“ come; by what Frauds, Oaths, and Op-
“ pression the Furniture of his House was
“ compassed, that this came by Lies, and
“ that by wronging others. Thus tho he
mistakes the Text, he gives us a Gloss
which is in it self solid. The Prophet tells
us, Hab. 2. 11. *That the Stone shall cry out
of the Wall, and the Beam out of the Timber
shall answer it.* The very Materials of
those stately Palaces, or whatever Houses
are built by Cheating, or possessed by Vi-
olence, as they call to Heaven for Venge-
ance, being procured by Injustice; so they
shall unitedly witness against their Erectors
or Owners; the Stones of such Walls will
cry, Lord, we were laid here by Violence;
the Beams shall answer, We were laid here
by Fraud. They are not a few who now
live in curious Houses, that will be dread-
ful Witnesses against them at this opening
Day. Says the Apostle James, Chap. 5. 3.
*Your Gold and Silver is cankered, and the
Rust thereof shall be a Witness against you,
and shall eat your Flesh as it were Fire.* This
will be brought as an Evidence of your
Covetousness, and will beget in you such
stinging Reflections as shall gnaw upon you
with Anguish and Torment. Ver. 4. *And
behold the Hire of your Labourers which have
reaped down your Fields, which is of you kept
back by Fraud, crieth, and the Cries of them
which*

which have reaped, are entred into the Ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. One observes that the same word in the Hebrew, signifies both a Wedg of Gold, and a Tongue; and some say that *Achan's* Wedg had the shape of a Tongue: Surely Gold, Wealth, Estates ill got, will have many Tongues, and cry aloud at the great Day of opening the Books. Then the corrupt Judg will hear of his Bribes and perverting Justice; then the unjust Lawyers Estate will cry against him; then the Possessions of Oppressing Landlords will declare that they were got by wracking poor Tenants; then 'twill be the Language of the full Bags of idle Ministers, that they were fill'd by starving immortal Souls; then the Treasures of Covetous Mammonists will acknowledg themselves to be the Products of Usury, Oppression, &c.

6. The Book of the Talents wherewith Men are intrusted, shall be opened at this opening Day, and these when opened will bring to light all the Days, Means, Advantages, and Opportunities of Grace that Men have had; all the Truths, and Duties that have been preached to, and pressed on them, what Pains have been taken, and how much done that they might be saved. One observes that God is very curious in Scripture to record the Time how long his faithful Servants lived on Earth; and says he, among other Reasons this is not the

the least, *sc.* to convince us that he intends to reckon with those who lived with them, for every Year, yea, Day and Hour they had them amongst 'em; they shall know they had a Prophet, a Husband, a Parent, a Master that was Godly, and that they had them so long, and God will know of them what Use they made of them. [*Gurn. Christ. Arm. Part 2. Pag. 262.*] Another observes, that the Year and Month, and Day, when the Word of the Lord came to the Prophets, stands upon record in Sacred Writ, (as *Ezek. 1. 1, 2.*) to teach us that all our Betrustments with all their Circumstances are now recorded, and will at this Day be made manifest. Then will be declared the Year, the Month, the Day, when such a Sermon was preached, such a Truth urged, when such a Minister was sent with the Lord's Message among you. In this opening Day, Ministers will open their Months, We preached so long to you; Sabbath and Sermons will speak, We were continued so long to you; Prayers will witness that they were put up for you so often to the Throne of Grace; Truths, now imprisoned, shall then speak; yea, the Dust shaken off from the Feet of those Ministers you despise and will not hear, shall speak against you, *Mat. 6. 11.*

Thirdly, The Books shall then be opened, whereby all things shall be examined, try'd, and judged. As in earthly Courts,
when

when Matters of Fact are opened and proved, then the Statutes are also produced, and Sentence is pass on such Matters according to the determination of the Law: So at the great Tribunal when the Books of Record, the Books of Evidence and Proof are opened, then shall also be opened the Law whereby Matters shall be finally adjudicated, and this is the Holy Scripture: The Holy Bible being the Law-Book of the great King, is now the Rule of our Lives, and shall be the Rule of Judgment at the opening Day, Christ himself, who is the Judg, tells us, John 12. 48. *The Word that I have spoken, the same shall judg him at the last Day.* This the Apostle Paul witnesses, Rom. 2. 16. *In the Day when God shall judg the Secrets of Men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel.* Who shall judg? God: What shall he judg? *The Secrets of Men*; not only their outward Actions which are manifest to all, but their most hidden Sins, and secret Duties, their inward Purposes, Designs, and Aims: By whom? *By Jesus Christ*: By what Rule? *According to my Gospel*; the Gospel committed to, and preached by me; Men shall be judged according to their Works, their Works by this Word: The final Sentence passed at this Day, shall be but a more solemn and manifest Declaration of that Judgment which the Lord hath in his Written Law already passed upon Men; that

that which is now said shall then be done. Now the word says, He that believeth on him, shall have everlasting Life, John 3. 16. Then Believers shall be crown'd with a Crown of Life. Now the word says, That the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6. 9. That the Wicked shall be turned into Hell. Look what Sentence this Law now passes on thee, the same will Christ pronounce in this Day; for this is the Book that must be opened, and which he will proceed by in giving Judgment. Thus you see what Books are to be opened.

II. The next thing to be considered is, what the opening of the Books implies: and it doth denote,

1. A manifestation of Mens Works, that they shall come to Light. While a Book is shut we are ignorant what is in it, but when it's open every one may see and know what's therein writ: So many of Mens Works, both Good and Bad, are like a clasped or sealed Book, secret and unknown; but in this Day they shall be like a Book open, legible to every one. 1 Cor. 4. 5. *Therefore judg nothing before the Time come, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of Darkness, and will manifest the Counsels of the Heart.* When the Lord comes, he will make great Discoveries, and bring to light things that are now Secret. *Some Mens Sins* (says the Apostle,

Apostle, 1 Tim. 5. 24, 25.) are open before band, going before to Judgment; and some Men they follow after. Likewise also the good Works of some are manifest before band, and they that are otherwise cannot be hid. Tho these Verses are taken to have another meaning, yet I may as some, make this Gloss on them, *i. e.* Some Mens Sins are open, notorious, appear to all now in this Life, they shew their Sin as *Sodom*; and some Mens Sins they are kept secret to the Day of Judgment, there's no noise heard, no notice taken of them in the World, but these follow after, to be opened at this Day. Likewise the good Works of some are evident, cannot be denied; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid, *i. e.* those good things in the Saints that are not manifest, but are either concealed by themselves, or mistaken and misrepresented by others, shall come to light; secret Duties shall come abroad, wronged Innocence and Integrity shall be cleared. This is the first thing this opening imports, *sc.* a discovery of Mens Doings, a manifestation of their Works; this shall be done by the opening of the Books of Record.

2. A Testification of the Works manifested, that they shall not only come abroad, but also be so fully evidenced, and clearly prov'd, that no Man shall be able to deny any part thereof. Sometimes in
Mens

Mens Courts, the Prisoner at the Bar denies the Matter of Fact that he is charged with, pleads not Guilty, and stands upon his own Justification; but when Witnesses come in one after another, and depose plainly, positively, punctually, and directly against him, bringing undeniable Evidence, then he is forced to confess. Thus now many are ready to deny their Deeds of Darkness; ay, but so many Witnesses shall come in at this Day, and with such Evidence as will force Confessions. O Sirs! the Secrets of Sinners shall be so fully witnessed, attested, and proved, that they shall confess: and the Saints that have been slandered, aspers'd, defam'd, and wronged, shall have their Innocence so fully evidenced that the World shall see it and be satisfied. This is a second thing this opening implies, *viz.* That all Matters shall be found, and fully made out as they are in themselves, with their several Circumstances, which will be done by the opening of the Books whereby all things shall be discovered.

3. A Determination or Judgment to be passed on the Works of Men thus manifested and made out, that there shall be a final determining, and definitive Sentence passed on them. This is another thing; this opening is an opening to pass Sentence, as Judges after full Trial open and read the Sentence out of a Book; an opening to absolve or condemn, therefore it follows

immediately in the Words, *the Dead were judged*, that is, Sentence was passed on them.

III. You have seen what Books shall be opened, and what the opening of them implies; the next Inquiry may be this, About whom must they be opened? To this, I say, they shall be opened about all Men Universally, the whole Off-spring descending from *Adam* by ordinary Generation, without Exception. This will appear,

1. From the Universality of Scripture Assertions in this present Case. The Scripture speaking of this, brings in, (1.) All Men. Rom. 14. 10. *We shall all stand before the Judgment-Seat of Christ.* Ver. 11. *For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every Knee shall bow to me, and every Tongue shall confess to God.* What doth the Apostle hence infer? Ver. 12. *So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.* 2 Cor. 5. 10. (2.) All Nations. Mat. 25. 32. *Before him shall be gathered all Nations: not a few Persons, but whole Nations; not a few Nations, but all Nations.* (3.) All the World. Acts 17. 31. *He hath appointed a Day in which he will judge the World in Righteousness, by the Man whom he hath ordained.* Observe, here is a Day appointed, the End for which it was appointed, *sc.* to judge; the Object of this Judgment, the World, the whole World; whosoever is of the World shall come to this opening Day.

2. From

2. From the special Distribution the Scriptures make in this Case, distributing the Parties that are to come to this opening; (1.) Into Quick and Dead; therefore Christ is stiled *Judg of Quick and Dead*, Acts 10. 42. 2 Tim. 4. 1. (2.) Into great and small, *Rev.* 20. 12. the King and the Beggar, the Rich and the Poor, the Old and the Young; they that have been so high that they have judged others, and they that have been so low that their Judgment hath been taken away. (3.) Into Good and Bad, *Eccles.* 3. 16, 17. Solomon there reports what he saw practised in the Place of Justice and Judgment, *sc.* he saw their publick Injustice, the Good oppressed, the Bad exalted: Upon which he communicates his Thoughts, or that which was his Comfort against these unjust, unequal dealings of Men; and it was this, that God would have a Day of judging all Men, and all things over again. *I said in my Heart,* (I comforted my self in this) *God shall judg the Righteous and the Wicked: for there is a Time there,* (where, why, with God before his Tribunal) *for every Purpose, and for every Work,* Ver. 17. Thus God shall judg the Righteous with a Judgment of Discussion and Approbation; the Wicked with a Judgment of Discussion and Condemnation; the Persons that must come to this opening are thus distinguished: Now all Men come under one of these Ranks,

either they are Great or Small, Good or Bad, therefore all shall be judged.

IV. Now you have seen about whom; the next thing to be considered is, about what they are to be opened; what things they are that the Books shall discover, evidence, and determine when opened? These are the Actions of Men, the Works, Words, and Thoughts of Men. Take for this but these two Scriptures.

The one is *Eccles. 12. 14.* where the things to be brought to Judgment are described, (1.) Generally, *every Work*; none shall escape, be pretermitted, or passed by, each one shall come in its Place; for there is a Time for every Work. (2.) Particularly, in regard, (1.) Of their manner, every open Work shall come in, none of these shall escape, no, not an *idle Word*, *Mat. 12. 36.* Every secret Work; the *Secrets of Men shall God then judge by Jesus Christ*, *Rom. 2. 16.* (2.) Of their Matter; every good Work shall come in, the Feeding of Christ in his Hungry, the Clothing of him in his Naked, the Harboring him in his Desolate, the Visiting him in his Sick Members: and every Evil Work, not an ungodly Word nor hard Speech shall pass, *Jude 14, 15.*

The other is *2 Cor. 5. 10.* *For we must all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his Body according to that he hath done, whether*

ther it be Good or Bad. The things to be brought in, are the things done in the Body, which is to be understood not exclusively as if external Actions only should appear, but extensively as including every thing we do while in the Flesh, whether internal, even the naked Thoughts, or external, Words and Actions. *Omnia omnino opera quæ fiunt dum vivimus in corpore, sive interioris nudis cogitationibus, sive exterioris verbis & factis peragantur.*

Tho I desire as much as I may to decline Matters of Controversy, yet here comes in a Query that I cannot well pass over in Silence ; it is this, *viz.* Whether the Sins of the Saints shall be laid open and manifested at this Day ? or whether the Books when opened shall open the Sins of the People of God, as well as the Sins of the Wicked ? It is a Question agitated among the Learned ; some maintain the Affirmative, and say, they shall be made known : others are for the Negative, and say, they shall not be manifested. I'll only premise these three or four things, and with Submission give my Thoughts about it in short. The Sins of the Godly shall not be opened,

1. To their Condemnation ; our Saviour himself says, Joh. 5. 24. *Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth my Word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting Life, and shall not come into Condemnation. There is* (says the Apostle) *no Condemnation to those*

who are in Christ, who walk not after the Flesh but after the Spirit, Rom. 8. 1. Nor yet,

2. To their Shame and Reproach; they shall not be produced to their Infamy or Disgrace. Sinners rise to everlasting shame and contempt, but Saints to Glory, *Dan. 12. 2.* They may lift up their Face, and have boldness in the Day of Judgment, *1 John 4. 17.* Nor,

3. To the abatement of their Joy in that Day. The appearance of their Sins in that Day of the Lord shall no more abate their Joy, than the appearing of the dead Carcases of the *Egyptians* on the Sea-shore did the Joy of the delivered *Israelites*. Neither,

4. To the damping or diminishing of their Love to the Lord. If the Woman to whom many Sins were forgiven loved much, *Luke 7. 47.* then the Saints shall not love God less, when they see how much hath been forgiven them.

Now these things being thus premised, I say, I conceive it is probable that the Sins of the Saints shall be opened at this opening. I'll give you my Grounds for it, and leave it to that Day that will fully open this and other things yet in the dark.

(1.) Because the Expressions concerning the Objects of this opening are Universal. The personal Objects are thus spoken of, *Rom. 14. 10. We shall all stand before the Judgment-Seat of God.* The real Objects are

are express'd in the same Terms of Universality, every thing, whether open or secret; every Work, whether good or evil, *Eccles.* 12. 14. every Man, and every thing of every Man is to come to this opening Day, *2 Cor.* 5. 10.

(2.) Because there is such a Mixture of the Sins of many wicked and godly Men; that the Sins of the Wicked cannot be disclosed with their several Circumstances, and the Sins of the Godly remain closed, but if the one come fully out, the other must. Those who are for the *Negative*, think the Strength of the former Argument is fully discharged by this Distinction, that the Terms and Notes of Universality in the Places mentioned are not to be taken collectively, as asserting that the Sins of the Godly as well as Ungodly shall be manifested, but distributively, thus, that the good Works only of the Good, and the evil Works of the Wicked, shall be manifested. But this Key will not (for ought I see) fit all the Wards of that Lock. Yet they confess, that all the Works of wicked Men shall be proclaimed: Now many Sins of wicked and godly Men lie so mingled together, and are so concatenated several ways, that it's not easy to conceive how the Sins of the Wicked can be laid open, and the other not come out too. It's sure a gross Abuse of Scripture, and a great Sin in wicked Men to justify and harden

themselves (as many have done) in Drunkenness, by the Example of *Noah*; in their customary Oaths, by the Example of *Joseph*; in Uncleaness, by the Example of *David*: but how can these Sins come out, and the Sin of *Noah*, *Joseph*, and *David*, not be made known? It was a Sin in the High-priest to grant Letters of Persecution to *Saul*, Acts 9. 1, 2. yet how can these Letters be produced but it will appear that *Saul* was once a Persecutor? I will suppose thee who art now a Convert to have been, when unregenerate, guilty of Folly and Lewdness with such a Man or Woman, and the Person with whom thou committedst it to have died in an impenitent State; how can that Party's Folly be exposed, and thine with whom it was committed lie hid?

(3.) Because the blotting out of Sin is referred to this opening Day: *Acts* 3. 19. *Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out when the Times of refreshing come from the Presence of the Lord.* Here you have, 1. A Duty proposed and press'd, *Repent.* 2. A Motive annexed, taken from the profitable Consequent, *that your Sins may be blotted out.* 3. The Time when this Benefit is to be received and enjoyed, *When the Times of refreshing come from the Presence of the Lord*; at this opening Day. The Scriptures speak of a blotting out of Sins at that Day, not but that the

the Saints enjoy a real blotting out of Sin before that Day; not that their Pardon of any Sin is not plenary, but imperfect, having part of its Guilt remaining then to be done away: but the Meaning is, that then they shall solemnly, openly and publickly before Men and Angels be cleared from every Charge of all accusing Adversaries, and their Absolution proclaimed before the World.

Now this Blotting out implies some Appearance of the Sins from which they shall then be solemnly acquitted. This may be the Meaning of that, *Mat. 12. 32. It shall not be forgiven neither in this World, nor in the World to come; i.e.* An Act of Pardon shall neither now be really passed, nor then solemnly proclaimed, and by his declaratory Sentence ratify'd. Sins that have been blotted out intentionally from Eternity in the Decree of God, and virtually from the Passion and Resurrection of Christ by his Satisfaction, and formally or actually in themselves from their Union to Christ, shall in this opening Day be publickly and solemnly blotted out to all Eternity.

(4.) Because this seems to make much for the Illustration and Exaltation of the Grace and Glory of Christ, *2 Thess. 1. 10.* to manifest the glorious Effects of his Passion and Satisfaction: When it appears what Sins, how many, and how various have been laid at their Door, the Love,

Passion and Merits of Christ will be more elevated, Glory and Honour will redound on Christ; then it shall appear what Strength was in his Love, what Value in his Blood. I might yet further urge the opening of the Books; the impartial Manifestation of the Sins of Saints as well as others in the Holy Scriptures; the dangerous Tendency of the contrary Tenent; the Aggravation it will be to the Horror and Sting of the Reprobate, when they see others (that have sinned alike in some things) admitted to Glory, and themselves for their Unbelief and Impenitence shut out. But the fore-mentioned are the Arguments that sway most with me in this case. Now what remains but that we apply this Truth thus explained in those Uses that it gives us, which are of

{ Information,
 { Reproof,
 { Exhortation?

First; Of Information: Shall the Books be opened? Then we may hence learn;

1. That all our Actions are of a lasting Nature. These die not in the Birth, but are abiding and for many Days to come. There are many things in this Life which as to the acting of them are transient and soon over, yet are durable in regard of their Issue. A Lease is writ over in two or three Hours, yet the Concernment of

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it may be for many Years, yea for some Lives. So it is with our Thoughts, Words and Actions, they do not die as soon as they are past, but are as Seeds which are sown in Time, and come up in Eternity: *Non transeunt opera sicut transire videntur, sed velut aternitatis semina jaciuntur.* There are Books of Remembrance, all is put on Record that we do, and is in a sort eternal. Says one, every Thought we think is eternal, every Word we speak is eternal, every Work is eternal, none of these but shall live to this opening Day. O remember this Sirs! your Actions pass not away, all that you do to Day, all that you shall do to Morrow, will remain till the Day of Judgment. All that in any Place, on any Account, in any Company, proceeds from you, will tarry till this Day come.

2. That all our Actions must come to Light: They are not only lasting, but shall be opened. All those things that have been covered in Darkness, that Men have acted under a Cloak, that no Eye but that which is all-seeing ever saw, shall come abroad. I remember a Story of *Ottobus* King of *Bohemia*, who refused to do Homage to the Emperor, till at last chastis'd with War, he was content to do it privately in a Tent, which Tent was so contrived by the Emperor's Servants, that by drawing one Cord it was all taken away, and so the King was presented on his Knees doing Homage to him in the view of three Armies then

present. That which he thought to have kept covered, was manifested before a great Number of Persons. Thus will God at this Day uncase and lay open Mens Doings. There are many who care not what they do, so they can but do it secretly. O but this Cover shall be taken from over them, and they represented as doing such and such things before Armies, not only of Men, but Angels. *There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known and come abroad, Mat. 10. 26. Luke 8. 17. Whatsoever ye have spoken in Darkness, shall be heard in the Light; and that which ye have spoken in the Ear in Closets, shall be proclaimed upon the House-tops, Luke 12. 3.* Your most secret Talk and Communion one with another shall be made publick. All the Hypocrisy of Men shall be brought out; all their Guile and Fraud; all their Force and Violence they have used in their Dealings shall appear; all their By-ends they have had in any Action; all their vile and abominable Practices, of which I may say as the Apostle, *Eph. 5. 12. it is a Shame to mention them*; even these that it's a Shame for Christians to speak of, shall be seen to their eternal Shame that have done them. As the Lord by *Nathan* said to *David*, *2 Sam. 12. 12. Thou didst it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the Sun:* So may I say, You do this or that secretly, but the Lord will make it openly known.

3. That

3. That we must meet all our Works again. All that ever we do in the Body now, we shall meet in the Books then. The things that now slip away from us, and we see them no more, will come again into our Sight when the Books are opened. Historians tell us of some Rivers which after they have run some space, fall under Ground and cannot be seen, but after many Miles running in the Bowels of the Earth, they break up again into a great Stream. Thus the River *Ana* in *Spain* burrieth it self, and runneth under Ground fifteen Miles, and then comes up again, whereupon the Spaniards brag they have a Bridge on which ten thousand Cattel feed daily. So there are many things we do which are no sooner done, than we forget them, they pass out of our Sight as Waters buried under the Earth. But every one of these after they have been a long time hid will come up again. Sirs, all that we do in this will meet us in the World to come. Our Sabbaths, our Duties, our Works will meet us, yea our Thoughts and Words will meet us. Art thou a God-fearing Man or Woman? all thy Goodness shall meet thee; not a Prayer, a Tear, a Sigh shall be missing, nor any thing that thou hast done or suffered for God. Art thou a Person working Iniquity? Thy Works first and last, thy old and new-done Deeds will meet thee. Perhaps now thy Deeds of Darkness lie all asleep, and make no Noise in thy

thy Conscience. O, but at this day of opening, these sleepy Lions will awake and roar upon thee. Thy Oaths, thy Lies, thy Drunkenness, thy Worldliness, all thy Sins will then stare thee in the Face as so many Ghosts.

4. That we have need to be circumspect and careful what we do at all times, and how we carry in our Generation, for there are many Notaries about us continually. God (as I may say) is ever writing, Conscience is ever writing, Devils and Creatures are ever writing. Nothing that we do escapes their Books, they take all at length to the last and least Circumstance of every Action and Work: what manner of Persons then ought we to be? Chronologists tell us of some Kings, that tho otherwise they would have taken more Liberty, yet they have been circumspect in their Actings, because they knew what they did would be registred and transmitted to Posterity. Did this so influence them? What Circumspection should it beget in us, when we seriously consider that all we do will be registred by many Hands, and certainly transmitted to Posterity, and not only so, but to this great opening Day, where it shall be opened to all Generations that have gone before, or shall come after us to the end of the World? O think of it! It's said of *Apelles* the famous Painter, that he carried on his Work very leisurely: and being asked why he was so deliberate and

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curious, his Answer was, *Diu pingo, quoniam aternitati pingo*; "I am long in painting, because what I paint I paint for Eternity, *q. d.* I am thus exact because not only the present, but many Ages to come are to look on and judg my Work. Thus, Sirs, many Eyes, and many Ages to come are to look on and judg our daily Works and Ways, and all the Passages of our Lives. O therefore let this teach us to live for an opening Day; to be careful nothing now be writ but what we would have read then by the whole World of Angels and Men!

5. That this opening Day will be a great Day. 'Twill be a great thing to see all Mankind meeting together; all that ever have been, are, or shall be over the Face of the whole Earth, standing in one Company before the supreme Judg. O, but will it not be much more to see all the Doings of all Men laid open! the Secrets that have been hid from Ages, and from Generations, now made manifest! all the things that have been done in Darknes, and covered with as much Darknes as that wherein they were committed! O what, what a Day will this be? and what will many appear to be when the Books are opened, and all the Passages of their Lives manifested! O what Heaps (as I may say) will there be here of Oaths, there of Lies, there of idle Words, there of Frauds, Sabbaths profaned, Sermons slighted, and of numberless

berless Sins of all sorts that Sinners have laid at their own Doors, and died impenitent in! Yea, what will many be found when the Books are opened, who have said well, seemed well, done many things, and after all gone out of this World with the Applause of Men? Surely many who can now say much, speak of God, and breathe out Good, will then be found others than at present they are taken to be. Secret Hypocrisy, secret Worldliness, secret Estrangedness from the Truth and Power of Godliness, will then be found where now there's little Suspicion of them. O that you would think of this, and see that you be indeed *Nathaniels*. There is in the Life of *Bruno* (Author of the Carthusian Friars) a Relation of a great Doctor (and his Fellow-Professor) a Man highly reputed in those times both for Piety and Learning, who being dead, when they brought him to the Church to be buried, as they were about the Funeral-Rites, the dead Corps suddenly sat up upon the Bier, and cried out, *Iusto Dei iudicio accusatus sum*, "I am accused by the righteous Judgment of God, at which the People ran away amazed. The next Day they came again to inter the Corps. and as they were about the Service, it rose again and cried with a lamentable Voice, *Iusto Dei iudicio iudicatus sum*, "I am judged by the righteous Judgment of God. The third Day almost all the City came together; and again it rose up
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and with a doleful Noise cry'd, *Iusto Dei judicio condemnatus sum*, "I am condemn'd by the righteous Judgment of God. That this was true I shall not assert; but certainly when the opening Day comes, many will be found in this case, many that have died in great Repute for Piety and Holiness, will then stand accused, judged and condemned. Many a Face of Wickedness will then be unmasked that hath been covered with a Vail of Dissimulation; many an unsound Heart will come out that hath been cloaked under specious Performances; many a glorious Professor will then be found a gilded Sepulchre. Sirs, look to, and see that you be altogether Christians, for these Books will open all, and open that which will exclude many from the Kingdom of Heaven who have been great Preachers, great Professors, that have known much, done much, gone far, and been well thought of by all round about them.

6. That it will then be in vain for Men to seek a Cover for their Sins. Our first Parents had no sooner sinned but they were for hiding it, and this is natural to us their Posterity; *Job 24. 15. The Eye of the Adulteress waiteth for the Twilight, saying, No Eye shall see me.* When David that good Man had fallen into the foul Sin of Uncleanness, you cannot, if you read the History, (*2 Sam. 11.*) be ignorant what Means he us'd

us'd to hide it. This is very usual, therefore says *Job*, ch. 31. 33. *If I covered my Transgression as Adam, i. e. say some, as our first Father did, seeking to cloak his Transgression: or as Adam, i. e. say others, as Man, as Man uses to do, or after the manner of Men. But alas, this is a most vain Practice, for Sin cannot be covered from the Eye of God now; For there is no Darknes, neither Shadow of Death, where the Workers of Iniquity may hide themselves, Job 34. 22. for he setteth their Iniquities before him, their secret Sins in the Light of his Countenance, Psal. 90. 8. Nor shall they at last be hid from Men and Angels. This will be one special Work and End of this Opening to bring all Secrets to Light, to manifest the Counsels of the Heart. Of all Sins these shall not be covered, it's a Day appointed for the opening of these, therefore says the Apostle, 1 Cor. 4. 5. Judg nothing before the Time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of Darknes. Why will God then judg them? The Meaning is not, that God exempts them from the Punishment of earthly Magistrates, reserving them wholly to his own Judgment, but 'tis because such Sins are commonly so secretly committed, that the Magistrate cannot, or so lightly looked on, that he will not punish them; therefore God will at that day judg both those things which have now been wrong judg'd,*

judged, and those which have not been judged at all. It's vain then to expect your Sins shall be covered, let not Hopes of Secrecy embolden you to meddle with Iniquity. This opening will open Secrets, and these will bring most Shame on you, and do most harm to you. There have been many strange Discoveries of secret Wickedness in the World. 'Tis storied of one *Bessus*, that having killed his Father, he was so pursued with a guilty Conscience, that he thought the Swallows as they flew about in their chattering said, *Bessus* hath killed his Father; whereupon he confessed the Fact.

7. That Shame shall come upon Sinners at this day, *Dan.* 12. 2. What the Lord speaks of *Niniveh*, that will he do to all the Sons and Daughters of Wickedness at this day; *Nahum* 3. 5, 6. *He will discover their Skirts upon their Face, and will shew the Nations their Nakedness, and the Kingdoms their Shame: he will cast abominable Filth upon them, and make them vile, and will set them as a gazing Stock.* O think of this Opening, and what Shame it will lay on you who go on in your Iniquities! Alas, were many of our Doings discovered now to a small Assembly of People, how could we face them? surely it would make many to look with Faces like Death. How will it be then in this great Day, when all must be brought forth not in a Corner before a hand-

handful, but in an open Place before a World!

8. The Terror and Astonishment that shall at this day fall upon Sinners. As it's said of the Morning, that it is to secret Sinners *even as the Shadow of Death*, Job 24. 17. So I may say, this Opening will be to them as the Terrors of the Shadow of Death. They shall not only, as the Thief, be ashamed when he is found, but they shall be made a very *Magormissabib*. As the King of *Babylon*, when he saw the Hand-writing on the Wall, *Dan. 5. 5, 6*. So they, when they shall see the Books opened, and what they have writtten in them, their Countenances will be changed, and their Thoughts troubled. O Sirs, it cannot now be conceived what Horror will then fall on ungodly Men. Have you ever seen poor Malefactors going with Death in their Faces to the Bar where they knew that Capital Crimes would be charged on, and undeniably proved against them? The Sight of these poor pale trembling dispirited Creatures was nothing to that which shall be seen at this opening of the Books. When poor Sinners are come to this, to have all laid open, and can neither deny any thing they have done, nor excuse it, nor appeal to a higher Bar, what a pitiful taking will they be in? O that this might be thought on now in time e're it be too late!

9. That

9. That we had need to take care how we close up our Days and die; for as we leave the Books at Death, just so we shall find them at this great Day of Judgment, when they must be opened. *In quocunque invenerit suus novissimus dies, in hoc eum comprehendit mundi novissimus dies, &c. Aug.* "In what state our last Day (says he) finds us, in that will the last Day of the World find us, for such as we die in that Day, such we shall be judged in this. *Qualisquisq; hinc egreditur, talis in judicio presentatur, Greog.* "Such as we go hence (says he) such we shall be presented before God's Tribunal: He that goeth hence in his Sins shall be found in them. Learn hence therefore to take heed how you venture on Death, what you leave written in the Books at your leaving the World. You would not die in Debt, leave Bills and Bonds behind you that may trouble your Posterity when you are gone: beware of dying Impenitent, of leaving Sin on the Score; for this will, if so left, trouble you another Day, and undo you for ever.

10. That it is a blessed Thing to be a pardoned Sinner, to have Sin pardoned. O this is a choice favour. *David* marks the Man thus privileged, for the happy Man; he doth not ascribe Blessedness to the Rich, to the Honourable, and Mighty of this World: It's not he that hath
Health,

Health, Riches, Honour, and Friends, that is blessed because he hath them; but blessed is the Man whose Transgression is forgiven, whose Sin is covered, Psal. 32. 1. That this is such a blessed Thing, such a signal Mercy, you may see from this Truth now under Consideration. The Books must be opened: will it not then be a sweet, a blessed Thing at this opening to find our Sins blotted out, to see a red Line of Christ's Blood drawn over them from end to end, so as we may still see the Sum we were indebted in, but see it cancelled never to be expected? *Arrow. Chain.* p. 211. Thus it shall be with true Penitents at this Time; when others shall find all to be answered for, they shall see their Sins as the poor Man sees his Debts in the Creditors Book, when either forgiven or paid, viz. crossed out, and never to be charged on him again; thus they shall see all blotted out. And will not this be a blessed Privilege? Verily it will. I remember *Austin* in his Confessions mentions it as a sweet Mercy that he could look the Sins of his unconverted State in the Face and not be afraid. Says he, *Quid retribuam Domino quod recolit hac memoria mea, & anima mea non metuit inde?* Aug. Conf. l. 2. c. 7. "What shall I render unto the Lord, that
 " my Memory can recollect these, and not
 " be afraid? Truly, Sirs, it is not now fully known, nor shall before the opening Day

Day what a great Happiness it will then be to be able to look on our Sins and not tremble, to look on them and not be at our wits end because of them, as ungodly Sinners will then be, to whom it will be a greater Terror to meet their Sins, than now it is to meet so many roaring Lions.

Second Use is of *Reproof* to those,

1. Who never think of this Day, nor how it shall then be with them. This is the Case of many secure and careless ones, who drive on in a state and way of Sin from Day to Day, and take no Thought about this Opening that is coming upon them. It was once the complaint of a good Man, Alas, what do I mean? I eat, I drink, I play, I sleep, as if I had gone behind Death, and passed over the Day of Judgment. It may more sadly be complained of many, that they carry as if there were no such Day to come, as if there never should be any opening again of the things done in the Body; they take not this into their Thoughts. Many readily embrace *Solomon's* ironical Concession, (*Eccles. 11. 9.*) but they as willingly forget his serious Admonition, *But know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into Judgment*, this they have no mind to remember. Art thou of this sort of Persons? dost thou never think of this Day? is it a Matter

ter that hath no room in thy present Thoughts? There is such a Day a coming, the Books shall be opened wherein all that you are doing Day after Day is recorded, shall be discovered, and tried, and there shall be a Manifestation, Testification, and Determination of all. You see this, and will you forget it? what Madness is it, and how sad is it that you should not consider this! *Austin* compares such careless Persons to them who awake out of a Lethargy, and fall into a Phrensy. And truly if you go on at this rate, this Day will overtake you unawares, and then you are sure to be awaked, awaked out of this Lethargy of Security, and thence suddenly to pass into a Phrensy of everlasting Horror and Astonishment. As it was in the Days of *Noah*, they were secure, and knew not till the Flood came: *Noah* had preached it to them, prepared the Ark before them, yet they took no notice of it; knowing they would not know till Destruction came suddenly on them: So shall it be in the Day of the Son of Man, *Mat.* 24. 38, 39. This Opening will come on Sinners when they think not on it; and how sad will it be to see all this on a sudden, when there will be no way to escape, nor Time to prepare? O think on this, and let it at last put you on thinking that there is an opening Day to come!

2. To them who from Day to Day live in Sin and Ungodliness. They are not a few who are workers of Iniquity, that drive a Trade of Sin; how many may we meet with in every Place, and among all Ranks of Persons that are plodding on in a Course of Vice? Open Profaneness is become very common in these Days. O the Profaneness, the Profaneness, the prevailing Profaneness of our Towns and Congregations! who can look out with an Eye but half open, and not see Iniquity abounding? which way can you turn and not behold those Persons who *drink in Sin like Water*, Job 15. 16. who *do Evil with both Hands*, Mich. 7. 3. and *weary themselves to commit Iniquity*? Jer. 9. 5. Debauchery is become a piece of Gallantry, and Intemperance a part of Religion, and open Looseness an ordinary Practice with very many. Thus there are many every Day filling the Books with Pride, Oaths, Lies, Drunkenness, Uncleanness, Oppression, Profaning of the Lord's Day, and many strange Abominations. But this Truth brings sad News to all these if they would open their Ear to hear it; it tells them that there is an opening Day coming, wherein all these things must be opened again, and accounted for. Consider it, art thou an intemperate Person, living in Excess, and following strong Drink? Or a customary Swearer, filling thy Mouth with Cursing,

or Bitterness? Art thou a filthy Adulterer or Fornicator, committing Folly, and sinning against thy own Body? Art thou a griping Oppressor, who inrichest thy self by making a Gain of the Necessity or Simplicity of others, and bringing the Spoil of the Poor into thy House? Art thou a fraudulent Person, reaching at all thou canst come by, be it by Right or Wrong, never standing to make use of Oaths and Lies, sinful Subtilties, and secret Tricks in thy Trade, or sleights in thy Dealings, so that thou mayst but hook in something thereby to thy self? Or art thou a Man or Woman living in the Practice of any other manifest and open, or secret and hidden Sin and Ungodliness? this Truth comes with astonishing Tidings to thee. Consider it you that are of this sort of Persons, either you are Atheists, or Mad, wholly beside your selves: Are you not Atheists? do you indeed believe this, that there will be an opening of the Books, and that such an opening as will lay all open? Then surely you are distracted; for how can it otherwise be? How is it possible that Men believing such a Day as this (if not beside themselves) should live so profanely, since thereby they prepare themselves to be then unavoidably and eternally destroyed? Can this be imagined to be the Work of any but distracted Persons? certainly it cannot. How wise soever you may be in
your

your own Eyes, or in the Eyes of others like your selves, yet these are the Ways of Men void of Understanding. Therefore knowing the Terrors of the Lord, how tremendous this Judgment will be, and what a terrible Time it will be with the Ungodly ; I would earnestly beseech and beg of you to take these things into your serious Thoughts, that you may think of repenting and turning to God. To excite you to this, consider,

1. God hath revealed his Wrath from Heaven against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men in his Threatnings, back'd with many sad Examples in all Cases, which are exposed to your view, and left for your Warning. You are plainly told, that God will by no means clear the Guilty, *Exod. 34. 7.* That the foolish (*i. e.* wicked Persons) shall not stand in his sight, *Psal. 5. 5.* That destruction is to the Wicked, *Job 31. 3.* That the Wicked shall be turned into Hell, *Psal. 9. 17.* That the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, *1 Cor. 6. 9.* The Angels that kept not their first state, are reserved in everlasting Chains under Darkness, to the Judgment of the great Day. The old World did for Sin suffer a Deluge ; for this Sodom and Gomorrah were reduced to Ashes ; Israel were overthrown in the Wilderness, and many such sad Instances there are set forth to those who after should live ungodly, and written for our Admo-

nition, upon whom the ends of the World are come. Sirs, there's no way of Iniquity but you may find a word of Wo and Wrath revealed from Heaven against it; you cannot open your Bibles now but you are ready (if you had Eyes to see, and Ears to hear) to lighten and thunder Terror in your very Faces.

2. That all your Ungodliness and Unrighteousness against which God hath revealed his Wrath from Heaven, is this Day book'd up, and on Record. Have you now been Drunkards, Fornicators, Oppressors, Worldlings for many Days? The Sins you have committed as such are in the Books: as you have kept sinning, God and Conscience have kept writing, not one of all your evil Deeds, tho never so little or secret, hath escaped; but all are writ, and so writ that no Time can ever wear or wash them out.

3. That you are bound over to an opening Day, and must certainly and unavoidably come to it. *There is a Day appointed in the which God will judg the World*, Acts 17. 30, 31. At this Day you must appear, there will be no escaping, 2 Cor. 5. 10. Kings and Potentates of the Earth, who can now best shift off Matters, shall then weary themselves with vain Cries to the Rocks for shelter from the face of *him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb*, Rev. 6. 15, 16, 17. All must appear at this

this great Audit, and grand Assizes.

4. That you must meet there all your Doings in the Books, and find them fairly written in this opening Day. And, O Sirs, what a fearful Meeting? what a lamentable Sight will this be, when all your Abominations of many Days, Weeks, Months and Years, shall appear all together at once to you? This will be an appalling sight. It's said, *Gen. 44. 12, 13.* that when *Joseph's* Cup was found in *Benjamin's* Sack, the Patriarchs rent their Clothes, they were astonished, amazed, and struck with Confusion. If this did put them into such a Posture, O what rending of Hearts will there be at this Day among Sinners, when their Sacks, the Bags where their Transgressions are sealed up, and their Iniquities sewed, are opened! O Sirs, it will be another thing to meet your Sins than now it is, they will then appear to you as so many Ghosts. You converse with living Men without fear, it never once troubles you to meet them in the Way, or in the Market, or to sit with them in the House. But if a Company of Dead Men should come out of their Graves, meet you in the Way and pursue you, would not this affright and put you to a great Consternation? Why the Sins that you now commit in the Way and Market, at your Bed and Board, will then meet you as so many dead Men, and be terrible to purpose. O remember

this, Sin, Sin will be another thing when you meet it again in the Books, than now it is in your Eyes: There will be more difference with respect to it 'tween now and then, than there is 'tween meeting a living Man you are well acquainted and intimate with, and meeting a Spirit in the likeness of a dead Man. Alas, Soul, all the sweetness that thou canst have in thy Sin, if thou mightst live in it a thousand Years, is not able to recompense thee for the Horror that this sight will put thy Soul into; nay, if thou didst but see one Sin now, as thou shalt then see all, thou wouldst not choose to continue in Sin for the gaining of ten thousand Worlds.

5. That you must have all that is in these Books, all your Deeds of Darknes, and Works of Iniquity laid fully open before God, Angels, and Men: as you cannot hide your selves, so you cannot hide any of your Sins. I would have you consider, this Day there will be no hiding of Wickedness. No question but as Men will be for crying to the Mountains and Rocks to hide themselves, so they will be seeking where to hide their Sins that they may not come to light. A cruel *Cain* will then be for hiding his Brother's Blood; a Covetous *Achan* for hiding his Golden Wedg; an Oppressing *Abab* for hiding his *Naboth's* Vineyard; a Drunken *Nabal* for hiding his Vomit; the filthy Fornicator for hiding his

his Uncleanness. O where, where, will one cry, may I hide my Gain of Oppression? Where, will another say, may I now hide my Tricks and Sleights that I raised my Estate by? Where, will a third cry, may I now hide my Lies and Oaths? O where may I hide my profaned Sabbaths, mispent time of Grace, abused Seasons of Salvation! Where may I hide this Sermon, and that Ordinance that are ready to rise up and condemn me? Where may I, who have lived in a Time of great Gospel-light, hide my Ignorance? O I would give all that I have for some where to hide these things so as they may never come to light. But all this will be in vain, there will be no Place to hide either your selves or Sin in.

6. That you must come to an Account and Reckoning for all. As all must out, so all must be accounted for, to the very last and least *idle Word*, Matth. 12. 36. You must be accountable for all the Evil you have committed, of all the Good you have omitted, of all the Talents you have been betruſted with, as Time, Health, Wealth, Gospel, Sabbaths, Sermons, and Ordinances; all must be accounted for.

7. That as you must come to Account, so you can in no wise answer for what you have done. Alas, Sirs, your Doings, your Lies, your Oaths, your Drunkenness, will be unanswerable Matters; all your witty

Distinctions, Shifts and Excuses will be of no Use when God shall say, Why have you done so and so? why were you drunk at such a time, in such a Place? why did you defraud one another? why did you profane my Day? I say, you'll then be silent. The Man who *had not on the Wedding-Garment was speechless*, Matth. 22. 12. This shows how little you can answer for Sin, how shiftless and speechless Guilt will make you. O think on this, and let the Consideration of the Unanswerableness of your Doings put you to break from your sinful Ways! And that the rather, because as you cannot answer for them your selves, so,

8. There will be none to answer for you. Job 5. 1. *To which of the Saints wilt thou turn?* Alas, it will be in vain to turn to any of them. None of them will answer in thy Behalf, nor can they if they would. Only Christ Jesus can answer for Souls in this case; but if thou come to this Opening in thy Sins, he will not then answer for thee: *Acts 5. 31. God hath now indeed exalted him with his right Hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give Repentance unto Israel, and Forgiveness of Sins.* But when this opening Day comes, it will be *the great Day of his Wrath, and who shall be able to stand?* Rev. 6. 17. This will be a Day wherein he will not come to plead for them that are found in their Sins, but to render Vengeance to them.

9. You are sure to be cast and fall in the Judgment. This will be the Issue, you'll not be able to answer for your selves, Christ will not answer for you, God will abate you nothing, therefore surely you cannot stand, Psal. 1. 5. There are but two ways of Standing in the Judgment ; either First, by Christ's Righteousness apprehended by Faith, and they who have this shall stand ; *For he that believeth on him is not condemned,* John 3. 18. *He (says Christ) that heareth my Word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting Life, and shall not come into Condemnation,* John 5. 24. Or, Secondly, by our own Righteousness, or the Works of the Law, an absolute and every way perfect Conformity to the Law ; if a Man had this he might stand thereby. But now, Sirs, the Ungodly can stand neither of these two ways : Not by Christ's Righteousness, for they are Christless Creatures : Not by their own Righteousness, for they are Transgressors of that Law that curses for the least Breach thereof, Gal. 3. 10. This way of standing is, and ever hath been impossible for all Mankind since the Fall. Therefore (says the Apostle, Rom. 3. 20.) *by the Deeds of the Law there shall be no Flesh justified in his Sight.* Therefore ; wherefore ? why, ver. 19. *That every Mouth may be stopped, and all the World become guilty before God.* This way the most eminent of Saints cannot stand ;

Pfal. 130. 3. If thou, Lord, shouldst mark Iniquities; O Lord, who shall stand? David himself says, Psal. 143. 2. Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant: for in thy Sight shall no Man living be justified. Thus Sinners, you are sure to fall in the Judgment, you have not Christ's Righteousness, and Man is not justified by the Works of the Law, Gal. 2. 16. And,

10. *If once you fall in Judgment, you must fall into Hell, where you must lie till you have paid the uttermost Farthing, Mat. 5. 26. And when will that be? Why, never, the Punishment there will be everlasting, ch. 25. 46. Your Damnation everlasting Damnation, because you can never make Satisfaction. Well, Sirs, these are the things I would intreat you to take into your Thoughts, they are certain Truths: and will you yet continue in your sinful States and ungodly Ways? Will you, tho you know that the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men? Will you, tho your Ungodliness and Unrighteousness be on Record? Will you, tho you be bound over to this opening Day, and must unavoidably come to it? Tho you must there meet all your Actings fairly writ in the Books? Tho all your Deeds of Darkness and wicked Works shall be fully displaid before God, Angels, and Men? Will you, tho you must come to a Reckoning*

ing for all ; tho you'l not be able to answer for your selves, neither will there be any to answer for you ? Will you, tho you are sure to fall in Judgment, and to be cast into Hell ? Will you, I say, notwithstanding all this, persevere in Sin ? Truly if this be your Resolution, it's a sad Resolution. You are resolved to damn your selves to all Eternity. But, O ! if you knew but what Damnation is, if you had but once seen what's doing in another World, or but felt that one Hour which the Damned are groaning under, and have to groan under to Eternity, you would be of another Mind.

3d Use is of Exhortation :

First, General, to all :

Secondly, Particular, $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 1. \text{ To Sinners.} \\ 2. \text{ To Saints.} \end{array} \right.$

First, General, to all. Shall the Books be opened ? Then,

1. Remember this Opening, and carry it on your Thoughts every day. This is the first Word I would leave with you. Think, O think much of this Day, this Day that never had the like before, nor ever shall again have after it ! You have probably heard of that Saying, *Whether I eat or drink, whether I wake or sleep, methinks I hear that Voice sounding in mine Ears, Arise ye Dead, and come to Judgment ;* (Jerom.) Why so, Sirs, where-ever you are, what-

c. tr

ever you do, let this Opening be in your Eye, and upon your Thoughts? Think on this when you go to Prayer: This Prayer, my Preparation for it, my Frame, Carriage, and Ends in it, must all be opened another day. Think on this when you go to hear, this Sermon, every Truth and Duty laid before me herein will meet me again at the opening of the Books. Think on this when you have to do with others, to buy or sell, or transact any Affairs about this Life with them. These Actions I now do, and all the Circumstances thereof will be found in the Books at the last Day. Think on this when Temptations come on you, and are in their Power, if now I yield, I give place to the Devil, and lay Sin at my door, and it will abide in the Books till they open, and all come out. And so in all other Cases carry this along with you in your Thoughts. Pray read, hear, buy, sell, eat and drink, and do all that ever you do as remembring this. Remember this Opening of the Books, Christians; and let the Remembrance of it,

(1.) Be a Remedy against Sin, a Preservative against Iniquity in these sinful sinning times wherein Iniquity abounds. It's the Remedy that *Solomon* prescribes to young Men, *Eccles.* 11.9. and there is much Weight in it, if Persons would but lay it to Heart. Remember, Sirs, when you are ready to turn into any Act or Way of Sin,
and

and let no Secrecy, no hope of hiding it from Neighbours, Friends, or the whole World encourage you to venture on it; for choofe how you may now cover it, the Books will open it. Let no seeming Little-ness of any Sin draw you to make light of it, for there is none fo little but there will be room enough found for it in the Books. The Tradesman hath not only a room in his Books for Pounds, Shillings and Pence, but alfo for Half-pence and Farthings, and will not leave out one, but put it in its place. So be fure God hath a room in his Books for your leaft Sins, which will cost (fays one) either the Blood of Chrift or your own Ruine er'e they be wiped out. O remember that Sin goes out of your Thoughts, out of your Words, out of your Works and Ways into thefe Books that are ready to be opened before all the World. Watch therefore Temptations, watch carefully againft Sin, againft the Occafions of Sin, and Appearance of Evil.

(2.) Let the Remembrance of this Day invite you to Repentance. *Paul* urges this as a forcible and preffing Motive to this Duty, and tells us, that upon this Account God commands Men every where to repent, *Acts* 17. 30, 31. Art thou an impenitent Sinner, one who haft been and art backwards to the Thoughts of Repentance? be forward in Thoughts of this. O think what thou haft in the Books already, how many

many things, and foul things are on Record against thee, how many Oaths that thou hast sworn, how many Lies that thou hast told, how many vain and idle Words that thou hast spoken, and how many sinful and unlawful Deeds that thou hast done. Take but up these Thoughts, and they'll convince thee of the need of Repentance, they'll induce thee to the Practice of it. The Books must be opened, how sad will it be if they open on thee in an impenitent State! Art thou one who hast laid the Foundation of Repentance from dead Works? May not this be a mighty Motive to thee to keep on building every day upon that Foundation? Thou renewest thy Sins every day, is there not then Cause every day to renew thy Repentance? Surely, Sirs, if you think of this Opening, and how you are sinning, it may be enough to make you say as *Tertulian* said of himself, *Nulli rei natus nisi penitentiae*, that he was born for nothing but to repent. Saints should not put more Sins in God's Book, than they put Tears in his Bottle.

(3.) Let it put you upon the Mortification of your Corruptions, and travelling after Deliverance from this Body of Sin. If your Sins be found alive at the opening of the Books, you must die. If they be not then dead, then your Life goes for them; for *if ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die, Rom. 8. 13.* And may not this put you on
this

this Study? We find that when *Nebuchad-
nezzar* had erected a golden Image with
this Commination, That whosoever would
not fall down and worship it, should be cast
alive into a fiery Furnace, (*Dan. 3.*) that
this took such Impression on all that heard
it, that there were none except three or
four which did not presently fall down unto
it: the Thoughts of a fiery Furnace made
them do any thing. God hath kindled a
Fire that shall never be quenched; and
when the Books open, all that have not
thrown down their Corruptions, their
Pride, Passions and Worldliness, shall be
thrown into it without Exception. And
may not the Thoughts of this be enough to
set us upon throwing our Lusts down be-
fore us? It is said of the Roman *Cato*, that
for a long time he never declared his Opi-
nion about any Matter in the Senate, but
he would still close with this Expression,
Methinks *Carthage* should be destroyed:
This sat much on his Spirits. So truly if
we look at this Opening, methinks this
should be on our Hearts, (whatsoever else
we think or do) that our Corruptions
should be destroyed, the Flesh with the
Affections and Lusts mortify'd.

(4.) Let it quicken and engage you to
Sincerity in your Professions, Actions,
Ends, Aims, and all that you do or say.
The Welch have a Proverb, That it is
hard to know three things, an Oak, a Day,
and

and a Man. An Oak, for the privy Wind and Shakes that may be within when it seems fair without. A Day for the Variableness of Weather and Accidents. A Man, for his hollow Hypocrisy. Why, truly now it's hardly known who is a Hypocrite, and who sincere; who is really for God and Godliness, and who in Shew and Pretence only. *One that is a Sheep without may be a Sow within.* But, Sirs, make sure to be what you seem to be, to do what you seem to do, to do that with your Heart that you do with your Hand. Let this Opening be an Antidote against Hypocrisy, carnal and corrupt Ends in Religion and Profession. Harbour not an unsound Heart under fair Pretences, corrupt Ends under specious Performances, or a made Religion in the Life without Truth in the inward Parts. For the very Hearts must be ripp'd up and laid open at this Day, which will unmask and make naked all the *Jehus* and *Judasses* in the World, the most close and wily Hypocrites that ever were under Heaven. In our Life-time we have been judged by our selves and others with our Clothes on, then we shall all be judged naked, all Vizards shall be laid aside. O remember, remember this Opening, and let it quicken you to Sincerity. *Luther* tells us of one *Arsenius*, who made a great Profession, was a Man of eminent Parts, praying and discoursing to Admiration; when
he

he came to his sick Bed his Friends that visited him expected to hear some great Matters from him, and told him, that sure he could not but enjoy much Comfort who had been so eminent for the Profession and Practice of Godliness. But he answered, that he had not that Comfort they thought he had, for he found it now with his Soul not according to what Man judgeth, but according to the Judgment God passed upon him, and God (said he) judgeth righteous Judgment. Thus at this great opening Day it will be with us, not according to what we have only seem'd to be, or what others have conceiv'd of us, but according to what the great God really finds; and all will signify nothing if he find not Truth within.

(5.) Let it put you upon serious Endeavours to be entire and perfect in all Points and Parts of Religion, to fill up your Christian Profession in every part. O Sirs, be not partial in your Obedience, in with one, out with another Duty; careful in some things, careless in others! But make Conscience of every known Duty, indulge not any one known Sin: tho you fail in every part of your Work, yet neglect not any part of it. Say not of any Duty as *Naa-man*, *In this, Lord, pardon thy Servant*, 2 Kings 5. 18. Excuse me, Lord, in this Neglect, in this Omission, in this dispensing with my Duty, in this indulging of my Sin.

Sin. I say, omit not any part of Duty, for the Books must be opened ; and when these are open, what hath been wanting will appear ; where our Profession hath not been filled up, the Gaps and Chasms will be found ; such an one was forward to publick Duties, but was a prayerless Person, and had a prayerless Family ; such an one was much for Duties of the first Table, but little for Duties of the second. The Books will open Omissions as well as Commissions, and God (as one says) will judge you, and may condemn you for what you have not done. Not doing is Damning as well as sinful Doing. You find in that solemn Process, *Mat.* 25. 42, 43. that what mention is there made is of Omissions, for not doing. He does not say you robbed me, you persecuted me, you put me in Prison ; but ye gave me not Meat when I was hungry, ye did not take me in when I was a Stranger, nor visit me when in Prison, And this their not doing what they should have done, was their undoing, and brought Damnation on them. *Lavater* in his Book of walking Spirits relates a Story concerning *Severinus*, a renowned and famous Man in the times he lived in, who appeared when he was dead, and confessed that he was grievously punish'd because he had not said over his Canonical Hours in due time and distinctly, but had huddled them up in haste. This is but a Fiction, yet certainly,

Sirs,

Sirs, there are many now in Hell for Omissions.

(6.) Let it induce you to Exactness in all your Works and Ways, not only to make Conscience of every Duty, but to study to be exact therein. This Opening may excite to pursue *Solomon's* Counsel, *Whatsoever thy Hand findeth to do, do it with thy Might, i. e.* to bring all thy Skill, and lay out all thy Strength in the doing of it. One drawing the Picture of *Alexander* while there was a Scar on his Face, drew him with his Finger upon the Scar to cover it. And *Apelles* painted another half-faced to cover the want of an Eye. But, Sirs, there are no such Draughts of Persons or Actions in these Books; there's no drawing of Persons with Fingers upon Scars to cover them, no drawing of Actions half-faced to conceal Defects and Obliquities in them. They are all drawn fully as they are in themselves: thy formal Duties will not be found half-faced to conceal the Formality of them; thy cold Performances will not be found half-faced, to cover their Coldness; nor thy uneven walking with Fingers upon the uncomely Haltings therein, to hide them. O methinks the Thoughts of this should be a mighty Help against the too common Looseness of Christians in their Spirits and Conversations, against the careless, cold, remiss and heartless Performance of Holy Duties!

(7.) Let

(7.) Let it be a Spur to Diligence, to Unweariedness in the Way, and abounding in the Work of the Lord. When *Cornelius* was praying, an Angel was sent from Heaven to him with this Message, *Tby Prayers and thine Alms are come up for a Memorial before God*, Acts 10. 4. So Christians, I am sent with this Message to you, to tell you that your Prayers and Alms, all your Works of Piety and Charity go up to Heaven, and are put on Record in the Books that shall be open at the great Day; and may not this be a great Motive to present Diligence and Fruitfulness? Consider, you shall meet all your layings out for God in the Books; your Tears, Prayers, Doings, Sufferings and Reproaches for Christ, shall be found when these open. There is a *Book of Remembrance*, Mal. 3. 16. Christ will remember the feeding of him in his Famishing, the clothing of him in his Naked, the harbouring of him in his out-cast Members, *Mat. 25. 34, &c.* A Cup of cold Water shall not be forgotten, *Mat. 10. 42.* You shall at this Opening meet all your Layings out for Christ, and you shall also then meet the Reward of them all. It will be an Opening wherein the Judg will give Reward unto his Servants the Prophets, and to the Saints, and to them that fear his Name, small and great, Rev. 11. 18. God will render to every one according to their Deeds; to them who by patient Continuance in
Well.

Well-doing, seek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality, Eternal Life, Rom. 2. 6, 7. Therefore, my beloved Brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, for as much as you know that your Labour is not in vain in the Lord, 1 Cor. 15. 58.

(8.) Above all, let it put you to clear and evidence your Title to, and Interest in Christ. This was *Paul's* great Ambition, to win Christ, and to be found in him, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. O let it be your endeavour. *Belarmine* tells us of a University where those who were to proceed Doctor had certain hard Questions given them to resolve, and four and twenty Hours allow'd them to study for their Answer; and according to the Resolution they gave, they were either to receive their Degree with Honour, or to be sent away with Shame. Sirs, when the Books are opened, this will be the great Question to be resolved, *sc.* Whose are you? To whom do you belong? What Evidences can you show? What Proofs can you bring of your Title to Christ? And according to the Resolution you give of this, you must stand or fall for ever. O therefore study this Question now, and see whether those things you now bring as Demonstrations of your Acquaintance with Christ, and Evidences of your Interest in him, be such as will serve you to plead at this opening Day! Do you think that the bearing the Name of Christians, the bare Pro-

Profession of Christ, your coming to, and sitting under Ordinances, or your layings out in the performance of external Duties, are Evidences sufficient of your Interest in Christ? If so, you are mistaken; for Christ tells you, *Mat. 7. 22, 23. That in that Day many will say, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy Name, and in thy Name cast out Devils, and in thy Name done many wonderful Works? to whom he will profess, I never knew you.* Nothing short of spiritual Incomes of Grace from him, and Conformity to him, will be enough to evidence an Interest in him.

2. Must the Books be opened? Then live for an opening Day, as those that look for, and account that they must come to this Opening. It was the Orator's advice to his Hearers, *Ita vivamus ut rationem nobis reddendam arbitremur.* Cicer. 4. in Verr. "Let us so live as those that must give account of all. It's the Apostle's Exhortation, James 2. 12. *So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the Law of Liberty,* i.e. the Law that spareth none, but dealeth with all freely without respect of Persons, though higher or richer than others. So speak ye, and so do ye as those that must come to the opening of the Books. Live now each Day as those that are living for an opening Day; Live as you would be found to have lived when this Day comes.

(1.) In passing your precious Time that God puts into your Hand. Sirs, God takes notice what Time he gives every one of us, what we do with every Hour thereof, and will require it again at our Hands. O spend your Time as you would meet it at the last in the Books! Would you meet with empty Time, large shreds of Time that nothing has been done in? Would you meet with Time that hath been spent in vain Thoughts, wasted with idle Words, consumed about Trifles and Impertinencies? Would you meet with Days and Hours that have been spent in sinful Sports and Recreations, as Carding, Dicing, Reveling, Hunting, and the like Practices? Days and Nights that have been palled in Taverns, Alehouses, and Whorehouses, in Rioting and Drunkenness, in Chambering and Wantonness? Would you then meet with Weeks and Years that have been lost on your Lusts, one while on this Lust, another while on that? Consider this, would you meet Time thus spent, wasted, lost, consumed, at the opening of the Books? Sure you would not: but if you do, know of a certain that it will be a very sad Meeting. As you would not thus meet it, take heed how you now spend it; for if you spend it after this manner, you must meet it so. But O carry as those who are going to an opening Day, in placing and bestowing your Time! So pass your
Time

Time that you may be found to have lived long in a short space. It was the saying of *Erasmus*, That nothing is more amiable than well to place our Hours. This will certainly prove so, when the Books begin to open, and Time begins to come out (as it hath been past in secret) before all the World.

(2.) Live for this Opening in improving your Opportunities, your Days, and means of Grace; improve these as you would meet them in the Books. Will the Books bring any good News to you at their Opening, if then you be found to have wasted your Means and Helps that God gave you in order to Salvation, if Opportunities stand on Record, that you have neglected out of laziness, that you missed to gratify your Lusts, and that passed while you were passing your Time at drinking Matches? Would you meet Sabbaths that have been spent in Recreations, Sermons that you have slept away, Ordinances that you have been under, but made no use of? O, no, no! Therefore when Opportunities and Advantages are offered unto you that you have liberty to close with, think thus in your selves; Would I have it recorded in the Books that I mist this Opportunity, or that I made it not my Business to profit by it? See that you be ready to close with, and diligent to improve Days and Means of Grace. Our Saviour came
from

from *Nazareth* to *Bethabara* to be baptized of *John*, *Mat.* 3. 13. *John* 1. 28. which some compute to be fifty six of our English Miles. But O, our laziness, who will not now go a fourth part of that way to partake of Ordinances? I have read of a good Man, who when his time for Devotion came, what Company soever was with him, would take his leave of them, with this fair Excuse, he had a Friend that staid to speak with him, he meant his God. But, alas, how little Matters do we suffer to be Avocations and Interruptions? Any thing will serve many for an excuse to shift off an Ordinance.

(3.) Live for this Day in performing of Duties, as Prayer, Reading and Hearing the Word; perform these as you would meet them again. Would you meet cold, heartless, customary, overly Duties, Duties that your Hearts have not been in, Duties that you have run over without Affection or Intention? It will be but a poor Comfort to meet a Company of these; and yet what sad Work do many make this way! There are many (says *Dr. Preston*) that will not omit Prayer; they pray from Day to Day, from Time to Time; and yet tho they pray every Day, they make not a Prayer all their Life, there being nothing of Life or Power in their Performances, they only do them of Course, or in a cursory Way. O, Christians, beware of
D this,

this, beware of Miscarriages in your Duties; when Formality, Deadness, Sleepiness, Wandrings creep on you, think how you can meet, face, and own those Duties, those Duties at the opening of the Books: carry these Thoughts with you as often as you go to any Duty publick or private.

(4.) Live for it in the Affairs and Business of your particular Callings; learn to manage the Business of your several Callings, and go through all your worldly Employments on such a manner as you would meet them again at this opening. Think how you would be found then to have gone through all your Matters, with what Integrity, Plainness, Simplicity, and Faithfulness, and study now to go through them on such a manner: keep your Hands clean; keep your Hearts above the World, when your Hands are in it; Buy not under-Foot, sell not at over-Rates; fetch not your Gain out of others certain and apparent Loss; be not all for your selves without respect to their Indemnity with whom you have to do; use not false Weights, Measures, or Lights; take not in any of those numberless Tricks that all Trades are full of; resolve either to be rich with Truth, or poor with Content. That passage of King *Charles* the first, in a Letter to the late King *Charles*, viz. Do not think any thing worth obtaining by foul and unjust Means, was of great Weight with me when

I first read it, and is worthy to be written in Letters of Gold. There is nothing under Heaven worth obtaining by these means, or that being thus obtained, will bear its cost, or prove a saving Bargain when the opening and accounting Day comes. O do nothing in your Callings and Affairs in the World that you would not meet at last! You would not meet the Tears and Cries of those that you have wronged, the poor sunken Families that you have oppressed, the Widows, or Fatherless, whose Land-marks you have removed. O, do no such things as these now; or if any of you have done, make Restitution, make Restitution, otherwise ye will (as Father *Latimer* in his last Sermon before *Edward* the sixth, said to the Kings Officers) cough in Hell, that all the Devils there will laugh at your Coughing.

(5.) Live for this great Day, in ordering the whole of your Conversation in the World; walk so as you would meet your ways again; let your Lives be uniform and all of one piece. It is *Solomon's* advice, *Prov.* 23. 17. *Be thou in the Fear of the Lord all the Day long.* If you would for an opening Day practise this, be in the Fear of the Lord all the Day, and every Day; let to morrow be as this Day, and the next Day as to morrow. There are some, if you would see their Goodness,

Gurn. Part
2. p. 138.

Godliness, you must hit the right Time, or else you will find none ; like some Flowers that are seen but some Months in the Year ; or like some Physicians that they call Forenoon Men, they that would speak with them to any purpose must come in the Morning, because commonly they are drunk in the Afternoon. Thus may be in the Morning you may take the Hypocrite upon his Knee in the Saints Posture ; but when that fit is over, you shall see little of God in all his Ways, till Night brings him again of course to the like Duty. Thus, Sirs, too many are of different and contrary Tempers ; changes of Time, of Place and Company, make strange alterations in their Frames and Carriages. As it is said of the Women in *Italy*, that they are Saints in the Church, Goats in the Garden, Devils in the House, Angels in the Streets : so it is with many, you may see them Praying at one Time, Cursing, or Swearing, or Lying at another Time ; Serious in one Place, Light and Vain in another ; Religious, and for Religious Exercises in one Company, but Ranting, and Drinking, and Healthing in another ; carrying as Christians in some Things, as Infidels or Atheists in other Things. But such Carriages as these will not serve for an opening Day ; they are sad now, and a great reproach to Religion ; but however any of you make them serve now, they'll never serve the

turn when the Books are opened : for our Actions and Carriages of all Times, Places, and Companies must be put in the Books, one as well as another ; not only what we have done at such a Time, in such a Place, among such Company when in our better Moods, but also what we have done at another Time, Place, and Company, when we were in a worse Frame : If thou pray in the Morning, and drink and live loosely all the Day, and yet come to thy Knees again at Night, these things shall be pieced and put together just as thou hast acted them ; but such Mixtures will make mighty bad work for an opening Day, it will be dismal to find the Books thus writ over : Here a Bible in the Hand, and next a pair of Cards or Dice ; here on thy Knees in thy Family, next drunk in the Street or Tavern ; here taking a turn in God's way, next walking in Sins way : Books thus written will open terribly. If you would live for this opening, you must study an oneness and equality of Carriage, and be *Holy in all manner of Conversation*, 1 Pet. 1. 15. not in some turnings of your Life, but in your whole Course ; you must do *Righteousness at all Times*, Psal. 106. 3. one and another without Exception. If we Ride, *Holiness unto the Lord* should be writ on our Bridles ; if we Drink, *Holiness unto the Lord of Hosts* should be upon our Pots, Zecha. 14. 20, 21.

(6.) Live for this opening, in laying out your Receivings, and imploying all your Talents the right way, whether Spiritual Graces, or Temporal Blessings. We find in the Parable, *Mat.* 25. 14.—30. that the Servants who were entrusted with Talents were called to a Reckoning at last. This is that you must come to, the Lord will require from you an account of your Stewardship. Would you live for an opening, an accounting Day? lay out your Talents in a right manner. Hath God entrusted you with a Talent of Grace, or Gifts, or Wealth, or Authority? Take heed what use you put them to, endeavour in your Place, and to your Power to profit others by them; use your Gifts and Graces in Comforting, Exhorting and Counselling others. Have you Wealth and Estates? think what good you may do with it. It's lamentable to see what use many that have useful Estates are making of them! One hath a fair Talent, in this respect, but he laps it up in his Napkin; the Church hath no help, the Poor fare no better, no good Work goes on faster for him. Another hath the like Talent, and he uses it, but how? Why, as Beasts do their Horns, in acts of Violence and Oppression: through Usury and pinching Bargains he sucks the Blood, and eats the Flesh of many poor Neighbours about him, thriving as People on the Sea-Coasts, by the Wrecks of Ships.

Another

Another sort waste their Estates in Riot and Excess, in Surfeiting and Drunkenness, in Pleasures and Pastimes. 'Were these to be painted, (says *Baines* on the *Ephesians*, p. 552.) they must be brought in with Dogs, Hawks, Dice, Cards, Curtizans, not clothing the Naked, not feeding the Hungry, nor converting any of their Estate to any good Use. But what will these do when the opening and reckoning Day comes? O beware of such Practices! And whatever God betrusts you with, be it more or less, make now the Use of it that you would be found to have made when the Books are opened. This the second Word, remember it, and remember to practise it. O, look on your Actions every Day, and think with your selves, will this and this serve for an opening Day, will this do at the great Assizes? Would I meet my Time thus spent, my Opportunities thus entertained, Duties thus performed, Business thus transacted, Conversations thus ordered, Talents thus imploy'd at the opening Day? Will these Prayers, these Performances, these Bargains, these Ways do in that Day? Thus commune with your selves, and live as those that must come to the opening of the Books.

3. Shall there be an opening of the Books? then prepare and get ready for it. Make it your Work Night and Day to get into a Readiness for a comfortable meeting of this

great opening Day, be perswaded to this whatever you leave undone. For consider,

(1.) That this Opening will come ; you do but hear of it now, but you shall see it hereafter. As our Saviour speaks, *Mat. 26. 64. Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right Hand of Power, and coming in the Clouds of Heaven ;* so may I say, Now you see but his poor Ambassadors that preach his Coming, but you shall hereafter see him come in a State of Glory to open the Books, to judg the Quick and Dead in one Day. Sirs, it is not a doubtful, a disputable Point, not a Matter in Controversy among Christians, but a Principle owned and acknowledged by all Sides and Perswasions, being as fully and clearly revealed as any thing in the Scriptures. The Apostle in that one Place, *Acts 17. 31. doth sufficiently and notably set forth this grand Fundamental, giving us Account, 1st. That a Day is set, He hath appointed a Day : and the Counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, Psal. 33. 11. The Decree is gone, the Day is proclaimed, it cannot be reversed, but must and will most certainly hold. 2^{dly}. Of the End of this Day appointed, viz. to judg. 3^{dly}. The Object of this Judgment, the World. 4^{thly}. The manner how this Judgment shall be managed, in Righteousness ; there shall be no Corruption in this Administration. 5^{thly}. The Judg, the Man whom he hath ordained, i. e. the Lord Jesus Christ,*

Christ, God-Man. 6thly. The Assurance hereof given unto all Men, in that he hath *raised him from the Dead.* This is sufficient Testimony to convince all Men. This may be Inducement to the proposed Duty of Preparation, there will be an opening Day. If it were a Matter only probable, if as much might be said against it as for it, then Carelesness in preparing for it might be somewhat excusable: But this is out of Question, 'tis beyond all Dispute, shall we not then make it our Work to prepare? Consider it, Sirs, God hath issued out a Proclamation, and it hath been published again and again in your Hearing, wherein he gives you notice of a Day appointed for this end, of the Persons that must come to it, and that your selves are of this Number; shall you not then be most inexcusable if you come to it unready? What will you say? Will you plead, Lord, had I ever thought of such a Day as this, I would not have done as I have, I would have watched and prayed, and lived for it all my Days? Why, alas, thy Mouth will be stopped, Christ will tell you his Writ was out, and this grand Assizes was many a time proclaimed in thy Presence; yea, the Books shall openly show the Times, the Places and Circumstances of its Manifestation to thee. O Sirs, the End is declared from the beginning, *and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, Isa.*

46. 10. All Generations have had fair warning of it, and we upon whom the Ends of the World are come want none.

(2.) That the Time of this great Opening is uncertain. The Opening is certain, but the Time when is unseen. There have some indeed undertaken to foretel the Time. In the Primitive Days, and while the Apostles were yet alive, there were some that pretended Revelations or Visions from the Spirit, declaring this Day to be then near, *2 Thess. 2. 2.* And since many have presumed to foretel the Year, whose Predictions Time hath already confuted. *Aventinus* shows, that about the Year 1062. the credulous People were so deluded by such ridiculous Predictions, that there was a general Expectation of the Great Day of Judgment as then just upon them. The furious Anabaptists in *Germany*, in the Year 1530, were so confident that the Last Day should be within that Year, that some of them gave their Estates about them to those who would have part, reckoning that a little would serve them for so short a time; and some of them ran up and down, crying to the People with a doleful Noise, Repent, repent, the Day of the Lord is come, the Day of the Lord is come. There are some who told us, that the Year 1675, others that the Year 1680, others that 1688, others that 1695, and some tell us that 1700 will put an end to the World,
and

and open the great opening Day. But our Saviour, *Mat. 24. 36. Mark 13. 32.* asserts, that it is an unknown Day, *1st.* To all Men, to the greatest, the wisest, the best of Men. No Man whosoever, whatsoever, can tell when this shall be. *2dly.* To all Angels; not only to us poor Men on Earth, but also to the glorious Angels in Heaven, who see the Face of God continually. These, tho they must accompany Christ, tho they must minister to him in that Day, gathering all Nations before him, yet of this Day they know not. *3dly.* To the Son of Man himself, as Man, or according to his humane Nature; for here he opposes himself as Man, to his Father as God. Or, the Son of Man knows it not with respect of his Office, tho he knew it with respect of his Nature, *i. e.* he was not sent to reveal and make this known to Man in his Ministry. Thus you see this Great Day is an unknown Day, a Day that shall come upon Men when they think not of it. Therefore he illustrates it by the coming of a *Thief in the Night*, *Mat. 24. 43.* of a *Bridegroom coming at Midnight*, *ch. 25. 6.* of a *Master returning*, *Luke 12. 36, 37.* O this Day will come unawares upon the World: and doth not this call upon you to be serious in your Preparation for it! May it come this Night, the next Morning, when we are taking our Rest? May we be awaked with this dreadful
Sound,

Sound, Arise and come to Judgment? or when we rise and are abroad about our Affairs, may we see Christ breaking out of Heaven, and coming in the Clouds with Power and great Glory? Why then we have need to make it our Work to prepare. Our Saviour uses this very Motive to perswade to this Duty, *Mat. 24. 44. Luke 12. 40.* In both these Places you have the Duty I am pressing prescribed, *Therefore be ye also ready*, ready to meet the Son of Man, ready to come to this opening Day. Also the Motive inducing thereto annexed, drawn from the Secrecy and Uncertainty of the Time; for in *such an Hour as you think not, the Son of Man cometh.* They might say, Lord, but what need is there of all this, of getting into and keeping in Readiness? will it not be time enough to do this when we see the Day approaching? what must we needs do it now? **Yes**, now be ready.

(3.) That this opening Day will be a great Day. As it will come, and its Coming is uncertain, so it will be a very great Day when it comes. The Apostle styles it, *the great and notable Day of the Lord*, *Acts 2. 20.* Observe, it's the Day of the Lord: these are our Days in which we eat and drink, marry and give in Marriage, and go over great Numbers and Varieties of Actions; but this Day will be the Lord's Day, the Day that hath his Mark
op

on it, as a Day whereon he will do his great Works. And it's the great and notable Day of the Lord: he hath had many Days of particular Rewards and Punishments, but no Day like this, therefore it's frequently in the Scripture called, *That Day*, by way of Excellency, *Mat. 7. 22. 2 Thess. 1. 10. 2 Tim. 1. 18. & 4. 8.* that singular Day that never had any like before, or shall have after it; that wonderful Day; that last Day; that Day that ends all Days; that that all must come to; that Day that all should prepare for; that Day that will be glorious to Christ; that Day that will be joyful to Saints; that Day that will be shameful to Sinners. Sirs, this Day, this Day of Days, will be a great and notable Day, if we consider, *1st.* The Person that shall then appear, *viz.* the Lord Jesus Christ: It's call'd *the Coming of our Lord*, *1 Cor. 1. 7. The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, *2 Thess. 1. 7. The Appearance of Jesus Christ*, *1 Pet. 1. 7.* He came once humbled in the Form of a Servant, but he shall then appear and be revealed in Glory, this will be *the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*, *Tit. 2. 13.* who shall come in a bright Cloud, *in a glorious Body*, *Phil. 3. 21. in his own Glory*, *Mat. 25. 31. in his Father's Glory*, *ch. 16. 27. in the Glory of his Angels*, *Luke 9. 26. Thousand Thousands ministring unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him,*

bim, Dan. 7. 10. O Sirs, the Coming of Christ at this Day will be a glorious Coming, he'll come in Glory and Power beyond all that e're was seen to this Day, and past all that e're shall be seen before that Day.

2dly. The Persons that must come to this Opening. Many Thousands, many Millions, infinite Millions of Persons, of all Ranks and Conditions. All Men, all Nations, all the World must be convened before him at that Day, *Rom.* 10. 14. *Mat.* 25. 31, 32. *Acts* 17. 31. Not only Men, but Nations of Men; not only Nations, but all Nations, all the World. O what a Wonder will it be to see all Persons that ever lived in all Ages of the World, gathered into one Company and Place!

3dly. The things that must then be opened. All things of all Men, things that have been hid from Ages and Generations, things that were never opened before to any, shall come out then before all Men. There is nothing so small or inconsiderable but will be revealed, nothing so secret or hidden but it shall come abroad when the Lord comes, *who both will bring to light the hidden things of Darknes, and will make manifest the Counsels of the Heart,* 1 *Cor.* 4. 5. And what a great Opening will this be? It will be such a Sight as never was seen, to see all Mankind meeting; O but it will be more to see all things that have been
done

done under the Sun by so many Millions of Men and Women brought and laid open as they are in themselves, and their several Circumstances !

4^{thly}. The Greatness of the Assembly before whom the Books shall be opened. This Opening shall not be in the Presence of some few, as of a Family, a Congregation or Parish, but in the Presence of Angels and Men, before a World. Alas, many, many would be ashamed to be laid open before a few of their Neighbours, and to have their secret things of Darkness brought out into Light among their nearest Friends. O but Sinner, those things at this Opening shall be opened before the World, that now thou wouldst not have thy own Father to know, thy Mother that bare thee to see, thy Husband or Wife that lies in thy Bosom privy to, that Child that came out of thy Loins acquainted with, nor thy Bosom-Friend a Witness of.

5^{thly}. The things done at this Opening. Now at this Opening of this Grand Assize there will be a final Determination of all Mens States thenceforward to all Eternity. You have *Mat.* 25. 31, 32. described the Preparatives to this Opening, *viz.* the Coming of the Judg, his sitting on the Throne of his Glory, the Congregating of all Nations, their Separation one from another, the Collocation of the Sheep on his right, and the Goats on his left Hand ;
and

and then you have the great Work of this Day, which lies mainly in passing a definitive Sentence upon Persons. There have been many great Trials here among Men, some have had Trials about Estates and Titles to Inheritance, some have got and some have lost Estates of Hundreds and Thousands in the Year: many have been upon Trial for their Lives, some stood, others fallen. But all these, even those of them that gave occasion to the greatest Noise in the World, are inconsiderable, and nothing to the Causes to be determined at that Day: Then the Trial will be what Title Men have, not to such and such Houses and Estates, but to the Kingdom of Heaven; what they can say, not to preserve a temporal, but what they can show for eternal Life; and the Determination thereof will not settle them in, or throw them out of temporal Possessions, but either settle a Kingdom on them to Eternity, or sink them into a Prison for evermore. *Unicum momentum eternam mansionem unicuique assignabit.* Ger. Then one Moment will assign an eternal Mansion to every Person. Thus you see this Opening will be a great and notable Day, and may not this put you upon preparing for it! Suppose thou wert to have a Trial about thy Estate in the World, or wert to be tried for thy Life the next Term or Assizes, and the Cause were then to be determined with or against thee,

thee, wouldst thou make no Provision for it, take no care about it? Surely thou wouldst. We see Lawyers are thronged to in such Cases, Friends improved to the utmost, all Circumstances weighed, and nothing neglected that may help. Why, thou art sure at this Opening either to get or lose a Kingdom, either to be made or undone, and that for evermore. O then fall upon this Work, and that the rather, because,

(4.) This opening Day (wherein such great things are to be done) will find many unready, and take many unprepared for it. This great Day will meet many without any thing to meet it with. The Apostle, *1 Thess. 5. 2, 3.* shows, *1st.* How this Day will come upon the World, *as a Thief, i. e.* suddenly and unexpectedly; a Thief gives no Warning. *2dly.* How it would find the World, *viz.* secure, fearless, careless, unready, so unready that Destruction shall come upon them, and they shall not escape. Our Saviour himself (*Luke 17. 26—31.*) sets out this Day by comparing it with the Days of *Noah's Flood, q. d.* there shall be a great Conformity 'tween those Days and these, 'tween the Men of those Times and these. How was it in the Days of *Noah*? they had heard of a Flood, (as we do of this opening Day) but they eat and drank (as we do) and never minded it, till it came upon their Heads, and swept

swept them all away. Why, even thus shall it be in the Day when the Son of Man is revealed. Many had heard of the Flood, but when it came few were in any Readiness for it, or found any way of Escape from it: So, many hear of this Day, few will be found in Readiness for it, and none shall escape it; and may not this awake you to Care in this Behalf! O many, many, many will be then unready! look to it that you be not of their Number, and that the rather, because,

(5.) As you are then found, so you are sure to fare for ever. Christ will take you just as he finds you at that Day. The old World was taken unready, and there was no Remedy, it was too late to think of preparing Arks. The foolish Virgins were found unready, and the Door was shut against them. So when Christ comes, poor Sinners that are found unready shall have no Time to provide in, he'll take them as he finds them, without any Delay. Some shall be found in the *Bed*, others in the *Mill*, others in the *Field*, Luke 17. 34, 35, 36. and as they are found, so they shall be taken. If two be in one Bed, one a gracious, the other a graceless Person, they must immediately be sunder'd, the one shall be taken to receive a Sentence of Absolution, the other left to lie and sink under a Sentence of Damnation. The main Scope of this Discourse is to show that there

there will be no coming off, no mending of Matters, no making of things either better or worse than they are found at that Day, but all Men shall be dealt with as they are found, and differently, according to their different States. O Sirs, when it's come to this, that the Books are opened, there will then be no further Transaction about Matters of Salvation or Damnation, but the Cause will be presently and clearly determined either with or against you. Doth it not then concern every one to labour to get into a Readiness for this Day?

(6.) That this Opening will be very dreadful to them that are unready. Many will be found unready, every one must stand as he is then found, and this Day will be terrible to those on whom it comes in this Case. We read of three terrible Openings: One when the *Fountains of the great Deep were broken up, and the Windows of Heaven were opened*, Gen. 7. 11, 21, 22, 23. These were opened and never shut till the World was drown'd. Another is the opening of the Earth which closed not again till it had inclosed *Korah* and those that appertained to him, with their Houses and Goods in its Womb. The third is the opening of the Cave at *Makkedah*, which ushered in a speedy Destruction to those Kings that were a little before in great Pomp and State, *Josh.* 10. 22, 23. Ay but Sirs, this is a more dreadful Opening than
any

any of these, and will be more terrible in it self, and to them that come to it unprepared, than those were. When the Windows of Heaven were opened, the World was drowned e're they shut again; but when the Books are opened, the World of ungodly Men shall be damned e're they shut: When the Earth opened, it shut not again till it had swallowed up *Korah* and his wicked Accomplices: When the Books are opened, the Wicked shall sink into Hell before they be closed again. When the Cave was opened, *Joshua* took thence the five Kings, and caused the Captains of his Men of War to tread on their Necks, and afterwards smote them; but when the Books shall be opened, the Saints shall tread down the Wicked, and they shall be as Ashes under their Feet. Heb. 10. 31. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the living God,* so as the Wicked shall fall. Pray think of it, it will be more Terrible than can now be expressed or imagined, all the Descriptions and Circumstances of it (with reference to Men in their Sins) are very dreadful. As in a word or two to instance, this Day will be dreadful unto Sinners if we look,

1. At the Judg, who is described *descending from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Arch-angel, and with the Trump of God,* 1 Thess. 4. 16. *descending with his mighty Angels, accompanied with flaming Fire, to take*
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Vengeance, 2 Theff. 1. 7, 8. Psal. 50. 3. Mal. 4. 1. to *tear*, Psal. 50. 22. to *punish*, 1 Theff. 1. 9. These are tremendous Expressions, and if it be nothing to hear them, it will be something to see them receiving their accomplishment, to see Christ descending with a Shout, attended with his mighty Angels, clothed in Flames of Fire, to *tear*, take Vengeance, and *punish*.

2. At the Day, which is set out on the like terrible manner, as a *great Day*, Jude 6. as a *great Day of Wrath*, Rev. 6. 17. as the *Day of Wrath and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God*, Rom. 2. 5. as the *Day of Judgment and Perdition of ungodly Men*, 2 Pet. 3. 7. O what appalling Expressions!

3. It will be a terrible Day, if we look at the poor Sinners who are brought in *weeping and wailing* at the first opening of this Day, Mat. 24. 30. Rev. 1. 7. O then poor Scoffers, *who walking after their own Lusts*, (2 Pet. 3. 3, 4.) *say, Where is the Promise of his coming?* shall have their Tune turned; They will then turn to their desperate but bootless Shifts. When they see him on the Throne, they shall cry to the Rocks and Mountains, *fall on us, and hide us from the Face of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb*, Rev. 6. 16. But this will be a vain Cry; vain, I say, for the Creature cannot hide when the Creator is in pursuit. But tho this be in vain, they'll thus cry, which shows the Terror that shall then

then come upon them. And if the seeing of the Judg make them thus a *Magormissibib*, what a taking will they be in when the Books are opening, to open all their doings before the whole World? What a taking will they be in when the Damnator's Sentence is ringing in their Ears? when they are sinking together into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone?

4. At the Sentence to be passed on them, which is *Tristissima & Horribilissima*, most Sad and Horrible; *Depart from me ye Cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, Mat. 25. 41. Every word carries a Wo, a thousand Woes, a World of Woes in it. O Sirs, to depart, to be sent away, to depart Cursed under the Load and Weight of Heaven's Curse; to depart cursed from Christ the Fountain of Light, the Lord of Glory, and the River of Pleasures; to depart thence into Fire, into everlasting Fire, Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels; this will be a fearful Thing! O when poor Creatures see that there is no escaping, but now they must go, and go with a Curse for their Portion; and go from Christ, Angels, Saints, and Heaven; and go to dwell in everlasting Fire, and have the Devil and his Angels for their Companions; what Weeping and Wailing will there be among them?

5. If we look at the Consequents of this Opening, these are very dreadful: for this
Open-

Opening will be immediately followed,

1st. With an Eternal Opening: (1.) Of Conscience, which will cause restless and endless Terror, Horror, and Torment: (2.) Of the bottomless Pit, and Lake of Fire, where they shall be for ever tormented with everlasting Punishment, *Mat. 25. 46.*

2^{ly}. An everlasting shutting; (1.) Out of the Presence of God, and Kingdom of Heaven: (2.) In Darkness, and under Damnation.

Now if any say, how may we get into such a readiness for this great Opening of the Books, as that they may not open to our Shame, Confusion, and Condemnation? Why, if you would be ready so as that when the Books open, Heaven may not shut, and Hell open on you to all Eternity, then,

(1.) Be often thinking on this opening Day; spend some time every Day in serious Thoughts of this great Day. I have before pressed this as a Duty incumbent upon all, and now urge it as a Direction for those who would be ready at this Day. Wouldst thou be prepared? then let this Day be ever in thy Eye by serious Meditation: this will be a good help unto thee in several Respects, as have been before shown. O therefore carry, carry this Opening ever in thine Eye! When thou openest a Book to read, or seest another open one, let it put thee in mind of this Opening of
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the Books: When thou seest the Morning opening after a dark Night, and bring many things to light that lay covered with Darknes; let it put thee on thinking what an Opening there will be in the Morning of the Resurrection and final Judgment, how things will then come out. When thou seest the Day shutting, think what a shutting this great Day will have. When thou art undressing thy self, and putting off thy Clothes, think what a Day this will be when thou and all the Sons of Men must be strip'd and laid open before the World of Angels and Men. When thou hearest of strange discoveries of Thefts, Murders, and Whoredoms, let it mind thee of this Opening that will open all the hidden things of Darknes, from the beginning of the World to the end thereof; let every thing be thus a Remembrancer to thee of this, and set afoot in thee some Thoughts about it. I have read of one of the Antients (noted for his singular Piety, and eminent Holiness) who being asked what Books he made his Companions, and used most, he answered, that it was his Practice every Day to read over a Book that had three Leaves, one Red, a second Black, a third White, *Liber cujus tria folia, rubrum, nigrum, & candidum.* In the Red he used to read and meditate on the bloody Passion of Christ; in the Black, the Darknes and Damnation of Hell; in the White, the
Light

Light and Glory of Heaven, whereby he gained more in the way of practical Godliness, than by any other study. I would here add a fourth Leaf to this Book, viz. This opening Day, and commend the reading of it to every one that would be then ready.

(2.) Watch and Pray. This is our Saviour's Direction that he prescribes in this Case, *Luke 21. 36.* In the foregoing Verses you have, (1.) Our Saviour's description of this Day. (2.) His admonition to his Disciples, not to be *taken unawares* and unready, *ver. 34.* (3.) The Reason of this Admonition, *For as a Snare shall it come on them that dwell on the Face of the whole Earth,* *Ver. 35.* It shall come suddenly and take them unready. And then (4.) In these words you have his means of prevention prescribed, and they are two, Watch, and Pray. Would you not be taken unready? Watch, exercise your selves in a universal Carefulness over your Hearts and Ways, over the Wiles and Ways of Satan, over the stirrings and motions of Corruptions in your selves, the Occasions and Advantages of Sin in the World, that you fall not into Snares. And to Watchfulness join Prayer, that great safeguarding Duty. Watch and Pray, Pray and Watch, that ye may be accounted worthy: Never think that you

can be ready at this Day, if now in your Day you live at large, if you make no matter what Company you walk with, what Temptations you run into, what Sins you lay at your Door; if you'll be false with God in your Profession, unjust with Men in your Dealings; if you'll Drink and Swear, and Profane the Lord's Day: no, no, this work will not do; I tell you, Sirs, it will not do: Wo to you if any of you put it to this venture, and say, (as, alas, the Practises of too many say aloud) either this shall do, or I'll be undone, for then you are sure to be undone for ever. If you would have this Day find you ready, let to day and to morrow, and the next Day find you Praying and Watching, find you with your Loins girt, and your Lights burning, as Servants that wait for their Lord. We read of *four Beasts*, Rev. 4. 6, 8. that were full of Eyes, both before, and behind, and within. Why thus, as these had not one but many Eyes, so you must be full of Eyes; there must be Eyes looking forward, observing ever what we have before us, what we enter on, or put our Hand to; and there must be Eyes looking backwards, ever reflecting on past Actions, on what we have done, that we may spy and correct our Errors; and there must be Eyes looking inward, watching over that cunning deceitful Piece the Heart, and the

the workings thereof. They that would be ready at this Day, must Watch and Pray at their Day.

(3.) Make the Word of God the Rule of your Conversation in the World: This must be the Rule of Judgment then, let it be the Rule of your Life now; you must be judged by this Book at the great Opening (if you would then stand) live by it now in your Day. This is another thing I would leave with you by way of Direction, O take it up! You see there must be a great Opening, Men must be judged according to their Works, and their Works according to the Word; so that if you would be ready, live now according to this Book, and learn to walk according to this Rule, in all your Ways and Actions keep an Eye on this. We find that the four Beasts, *Rev. 4. 8.* had each of them six Wings about him, and they were full of Eyes within: Wings are for Motion, Eyes for guidance and direction in that Motion; so that this Phrase imports that their Motion was not blind and lawless, but regular and orderly. Why thus we must have Eyes under our Wings, *i. e.* our Actions and Motions must be ordered, guided, and directed by the Light of the Word: says *David*, *Psal. 119. 105. Thy Word is a Lamp unto my Feet, and a Light unto my Path;*

q. d. I am as one in the dark who dare not walk, nor stir a step from his Station without a Light to direct him. I dare not walk without thy Word, turn into any Way and Course but such as this guides me into, and shines on me in. So he shows that God's *Testimonies were his Counsellors*, ver. 24. He alludes unto the Customs of Kings who have their Counsellors ever ready to assist them in their great and arduous Affairs, *q. d.* As Kings have their Counsellors, so have I too; thy Testimonies they are the Men of my Counsel, in all my Matters I go to them, and consult with them, I hear what they say, and of them I take Direction. Why thus, Sirs, if you would be in readiness for an opening Day, let the Word of God be a Lamp to your Feet, and let his Testimonies be the Men of your Counsel; e're you entertain or take in Thoughts, before you send out any Words, or set upon any Actions, go to this Word with them, and hear what it hath to say of this Thought, that Word, of those Works, and let it be your utmost endeavour as far as is possible, to put nothing into those Books which shall be opened, but what this Book now open warrants and allows. If such and such an Action, Way, or Practice, will not stand before the Word, let it not stand in your Lives, this is the Way to see a comfortable opening at last. *Si*

hunc librum Conscientiæ recte vis scribere, scribe eum secundum exemplar libri vitæ ; Liber vitæ est Christus, &c. “ If you will
 “ write the Book of Conscience aright,
 “ write it according to the Book of Life ;
 “ the Book of Life is Christ. Let the
 profession of your Faith be conformable to
 the Rule of his Doctrine, and in your Life
 imitate the Life of Christ. *Every one that*
doeth Evil hateth Light, neither cometh to the
Light, lest his Deeds should be reprovèd, John
 3. 20. They cannot abide to be tried by
 Scripture-Rules, they dare not put their
 Doing to be tried by the Book of God ;
 but this will make foul work for an open-
 ing Day. If your Ways cannot stand be-
 fore the Word now, never think that
 they shall stand before it another Day :
 The Word that now condemns Drunken-
 ness, will then condemn it ; the Word that
 condemns Oaths and Lies now, will con-
 demn them at that Day. The Sentence at
 this great Opening shall not be another, or
 different Sentence, but only a Manifestati-
 on, Confirmation of that which is now
 passed in the Word upon Men and their
 Actions. O if we would but make it our
 Care to follow this one Direction, and
 write nothing in those Books which are to
 be opened, but what we take out of the
 Book which is now open and set before us
 as our Exemplar and Copy, putting nothing

on record there but what we find allowed here ; then what manner of Persons should we be, and how far otherwise would the Books be found at this great Opening, than most must find them ?

(4.) Reckon often with your selves, call your selves frequently to account, be much in self-examining, self-judging Exercises. I have read of one who would ask himself three Questions every Night ; (1.) What Evil hast thou healed to Day ? (2.) What Corruption hast thou stood against to Day ? (3.) Wherein, or in what art thou bettered now this Day is gone ? Why on this manner, Sirs, be often dealing with your selves, lay the Word and your own Hearts, the Word and your own Ways together at the end of every Day. When you have gone over a Day in the World, go over it again between the Word and your own Souls, and seriously renew your Repentance and Self-accusations. You say, Often reckoning keeps long Friends ; O reckon oft with God and your own Souls ; for *if we would judg our selves, we should not be judged,* 1 Cor. 11. 31. Our self-accusations would prevent Satan's Accusations against us : He is the Accuser of the Brethren, and will have many things to charge us with : but when a Man accuses and humbles himself, Satan is prevented ; tho he come in with
this

this and the other complaint, God will say (as it were) Why Satan, this Man hath accused himself before thou camest; thou art here with this now, but he was here with it and mourned over it as soon as it was done, the same Day; and he hath been oft at my Feet about it with Sorrow in his Heart, and Tears in his Eyes; yea this would not only prevent Satan's Accusations, but the Judgment of God. *Judicio pœnitentialem evacuatur judicium pœnale.* Amas.
 " If we would judg our selves with a Penitential, the Penal Judgment would
 " be prevented. Says David, Psal. 32. 5. *I acknowledged my Sin unto thee, and mine Iniquity have I not hid; I said I will confess my Transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my Sin.* The Spouse privy to her own Infirmities, called her self black, *Cant.* 1. 5. but Christ calls her fair. If we will condemn our selves, God will justify us; if we put out our Tears that come from a right Spring into his Bottel, he will not seal up our Iniquities (for which those Tears were shed) in a Bag.

(5.) Make it your great study and care to have and keep Conscience your Friend: this is now your constant Companion, and goes whither you go; this will be a thousand Witnesses, yea, and a Judg in your own Bosom at that Day. Exercise your

self as *Paul*, to have always a Conscience void of Offence toward God, and toward Men, Acts 24. 16. Labour to have such a Conscience as may speak well of thee when thou comest to Judgment. *In die judicii plus valebit Conscientia pura quam marsupia plena.* Bern. "In the Day of Judgment a good "Conscience will be better than a full "Purse; for which many Men wound and wrong, and waste their own Consciences. This will in that Day be no better than Mire in the Streets; but to have a good Conscience go with us to the Bar, and witness for us there, will be something. As you would stand in the Judgment, look to this in all your Ways, and be often listening to hear what it says to you, and of you. It's said of *Apelles* the famous Painter, that when he had finished a Draught, he would usually expose it to view, and lie behind it, that he might hear what others said of it. Why, on this manner bring all your Actions to the view of Conscience, and hear what this (going by a right Rule, and rightly informed) says of them; for if our Heart condemn us, God is greater than our Heart, and knoweth all things, 1 John 3. 20. This is but the Deputy-Judge, and if this condemn, the great and supreme Judge will not absolve. Art thou forced now to neglect and disregard, to silence and flight; nay, to wound and resist thy Conscience?

science? would it stop thee, and thou wilt not be stopped? Why, alas, the Day is coming when this Conscience will surely condemn thee, and God who is greater than Conscience will condemn thee. Sirs, if you would have Conscience your Friend at that Day, give it Content now; if you would not have it full of Complaints then, study to keep it void of Offence now.

(6.) Lastly, above all, and without which all is nothing, labour to be found in Christ at this great opening Day. This was *Paul's* great Study to win Christ, and *to be found in him*, Phil. 3. 9. Let it be your great Business to win Christ against this Day, to be found in him at that Day. I say, to be found in Christ, *i. e.* to be washed in his Blood, clothed with his Righteousness, all lies on this, nothing but this will serve at this Opening. It's only Christ's Blood that blots, scores, and crosses out our Sins; it's only Christ's Merits that satisfy divine Justice for our Iniquities; it's only Christ's Righteousness that covers all our Unrighteousness, and is our Righteousness; it's only Christ's Death that sets Matters right between God and Souls interested therein. Nothing but Christ's Righteousness will serve for Christ's Judgment. O when he comes with his Garments white as Snow, and Hair of his Head like the pure Wool,

Dan. 7. 9. and sits on a white Throne, *Rev.* 20. 11. there will be no standing for any but such as are arrayed in the white Robes of Christ's Righteousness. Out of Christ then, and undone for ever; but if then you have Christ, all shall be well. *Luther*, in his Commentary on *Genesis*, prescribes unto tempted Persons one compendious way to withstand all Temptations whatsoever: says he, Let Satan come any way, or the World come any way, or the Flesh move any way, answer all with these two Words, I may not, I must not, for I am a Christian. Why, as that is a compendious way of answering all Temptations; so this will be a compendious way of answering all Accusers and Accusations at the opening Day; and not only compendious, but the one and only way, *viz.* I have a Christ. As a Believer may answer all present Temptations, so may he with this (when all is open before the World, Angels and Men) answer all Accusations of Justice, Law, Sin, Satan, and all Accusers. It's called the Answer of a good Conscience. A good Conscience is a Conscience sprinkled with the Blood of Jesus, and this Conscience hath an Answer to make for the Soul. We read of the *Answer of a good Conscience towards God*, *1 Pet.* 3. 21. Now an Answer supposeth a Question, an Answer towards God supposeth a Question from him to the Creature.

ture. Now the Question (says one) that God is supposed to propound to the poor Creature, may be conceived to be this, What canst thou say (who art a Sinner, and stands by the Curse of my righteous Law, doomed to Death and Damnation) why thou shouldst not die the Death pronounced against every Sinner? This is the grand Question. Now, saith he, the Soul that hath heard of Christ, and hearing of him hath received him by Faith into his Heart, is the Person, and the only Person that can answer this Question so as to satisfy God or himself. Take the Answer as it is formed and fitted for, yea put into the Mouth of every Believer by the Apostle Paul, Rom. 8. 34. *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right Hand of God, who also maketh Intercession for us.* Who condemneth? Here is the confident Interrogatory of a good Conscience. It is Christ that died, &c. Here's its comfortable Answer, an Answer that none can ever object against. Why, my Beloved, as this is now an Answer beyond Exception, so it will be in that great Day. If you have but then this Answer of a good Conscience, and can say, I have a Christ who died for me, you shall need to fear no Accusers, no Condemnation. Even then when
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Gurn. Chr. Arm.
Part 2. p. 334.

the Heavens and the Earth are flying away from the Face of him that sits on the Throne, and Multitudes of all Ranks are crying to the Rocks and Mountains to fall on them and hide them from his Face, this Plea will abide the Sight of God, and stand before his dreadful Tribunal at the great Day of the Revelation of his righteous Judgment.

Secondly; Particular Exhortation, { To Sinners.
} To Saints.

1. To Sinners. Shall the Books be opened? Then this speaks to poor secure Sinners who make nothing of this great Opening, never mind it nor once think how they shall speed at that Day; but say in their Hearts, If we may escape till then, then let us do as we can, we hope we shall shift as well as many more that will be in our own case. 'Tis to be feared that in these profane Times there are more than a few of these, who yet (led with Custom) come to and set up their Faces in our Congregations: If any of you that are come hither this Day be of this sort of Persons, such as care not for this great Opening, but keep on in your Sins, filling up the Books every Day with new Abominations, the Lord hath sent me hither this Day to meet you with a Word of Exhortation; and knowing

ing the Terror of the Lord, (what a terrible time it will be) I perswade, beseech, entreat you to entertain it. It's that of the Apostle, *Acts* 3. 19. *Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the Presence of the Lord.* This wrought with many at that time, *ch.* 4. 4. O do no more make light of this Day and the things thereof, but repent now, and be converted, that your Sins may be then blotted out. This is the Word that I would leave with you; and pray consider, that you may not make light of it,

(1.) That Pagans and Heathens have trembled at the Hearing of this Day, *Acts* 24. 25. Mark, *Paul* was here preaching, and *Felix* was hearing, and as *Paul* reasoned he trembled, he was in a great Consternation, *ἐμφοβήθη*, *Metu percussus, & perterritus*: When the Judgment to come was laid before him, his Conscience began to awake, and put him into a trembling Posture. Now will you be worse than professed Pagans, more stupid, senseless and fearless than Heathens? Shall a Man who never heard of a Day of Judgment before, who never was under an Ordinance before, (as *Felix*) tremble at the preaching of this Judgment, and you who have heard hundreds of Sermons, make light of it? O think

think of this, and what a dreadful thing it will be to have a *Felix* rise up in the Judgment against you ; poor Pagans to come in and cry, O if we had been forewarned of such a Day as these have been, we would never have done as we did ! Sirs, you would take it ill now if one should rank you with Pagans and Heathens : O what, what will it be to be made speechless by them, to have them crying and coming in against you ; yea, to see the Lord himself bringing them against you, and saying, Lo here are poor Creatures that would have repented in Dust and Ashes if this Day might have been preached to them as it hath been many a time, and by many of my Ambassadors to you !

(2.) That the very Devils themselves tremble at the Thoughts of this great Day. They are reserved in everlasting Chains under Darknes unto the Judgment of the great Day, *Jude* 6. A Metaphor taken from notorious Malefactors who are kept in close Prison till the Assize where they are to be tried and have Judgment : Thus the Devils are reserved to this great Day, and they tremble to think of it. *They believe and tremble, i. e.* are under a continual Fear and Dread of the great God who will come one Day, as they know, to Judgment against them. This they tremble at : the word

word signifies an extreme Fear, shaking and Tumult, as is in the Sea when it works and is tempestuous. Thus the Thoughts of the Day of Judgment make a Hurry, a Roaring even among the Devils, they are under dreadful Commotions at the Reflection on this Day, because then the Fulness of their Torments are to begin. Hence was that Cry, *What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?* Mat. 8. 29. *Ausfin* thinks that when the Devils saw Christ thus come into the World, they thought the Day of Judgment (which they expected not so soon) was just upon them, and this Apprehension put them into a mighty Consternation: *Art thou come to torment us before the time?* O they were in a fearful Fit upon this. And Sirs, will you be worse than the Devils, not only worse than Pagans but than Devils also? Will not that that shakes Hell it self, shake and awake your Consciences? Shall Devils tremble in Hell at the Thoughts of this Day, and poor Sinners on Earth (that must be in that Day sorted, and sink for ever with them) be secure and careless!

(3.) That this Day will make you (that are most secure and confident) to tremble if it take you in your Sins: Pagans have trembled, Devils do tremble, and you shall trem-

tremble. *The Wicked is reserved to the Day of Destruction; they shall be brought forth to the Day of Wrath, Job 21. 30. 2 Pet. 2. 9.* And O when this Day is come, and is upon you, there will be Trembling and Shaking amongst you. The great Executions of Wrath on wicked Men are reserved to that Day. There have been many terrible Plagues upon the World, but Sirs, the saddest, the strangest, the most affrighting, have been but as Drops to the Showers of this Day, Smoakings of God's Wrath to the Fire of this Day. The old World was drowned with a very terrible Inundation, but there's a more dreadful Doom abiding for it. *Sodom* was destroyed with a sudden strange Destruction, but there's a more strange Destruction to come on those filthy Sodomites: *Sodomiti olim perdit, iterum perdendi.* Some of the Antients have said, that there are three sorts of Thunderbolts in Heaven; the first to warn, not to hurt; the second to hurt, but not to destroy; the third to ruine and lay all waste. The two first sorts (says one) God often in this Life dischargeth upon wicked Men, but the third and worst is reserved for this Day, when all the Artilleries of Heaven shall go off at once, when all the Fountains of God's Wrath shall be broken up, when the Lord shall rain Snares, Fire and Brimstone, and a horrible Tempest upon the Wicked, *Pf. 11. 6.*

O Sirs, the Chear will be turned when you see Signs in the Sun, when you see the Tribes of the Earth mourn, the Heavens passing away with a great Noise, the Elements melting with fervent Heat, and the Earth with the Works that are therein burnt up. I remember I have read of crook-back'd *Richard*, that in that Battel wherein he fell, when he saw himself in a helpless Condition, he cried out vehemently, *A Kingdom for a Horse, a Kingdom for a Horse*. Why so, Soul, when thou art under these Circumstances, thou'lt cry out, Riches for a Christ, Gold and Silver for a Christ, Houses and Land for a Christ, a Kingdom if I had it for Christ, the World if it were mine for Christ. Now give me Christ, and Grace, and Pardon, and take all my Riches, Treasures and Pleasures; give me, give me these now, or I am for ever, for ever undone; I know not what to do, whither to go: God is against me, Conscience against me, Satan against me, Fellow-Sinners are against me, Saints against me, Creatures against me, the Law and Sin against me. Sirs, it will come to this with you; and when it is once come to this, there will be no escaping.

2. Shall the Books be opened? Then it speaks to the Saints and Servants of God, who have made it their Business to remember

ber to live for and be in a Readiness against it, look for and comfort your selves with the Hope of this great Opening Day. Our Saviour speaking of the Tokens of this Day, (*Luke 21. 28.*) says to his Disciples, *Look up, and lift up your Heads, for your Redemption draweth nigh, q. d.* it shall be a good Day to you, you shall have no Cause to be dismay'd, but may meet it with Comfort. It's observable, that this Promise is the last Promise in the Book of God, the last Message that Christ in Heaven sends to his Church on Earth before his Coming again; *Surely I come quickly, Rev. 22. 20.* with which, as good News, he closes all up, and you have its Welcome, *Amen, even so come Lord Jesus.* O Sirs, the Saints have looked for, have comforted themselves with the Hopes of this Day. *Luther* said, he had rather never have been born than not to be in Expectation of this Day. O it is a Day to be expected, a Day to be looked and longed for, and a Day to be rejoiced in! Consider, that you may be quickned to look and long for it, to encourage and comfort your selves in it,

(1.) That at this great Opening your Sins will be found blotted out. Those Sins that you have gone mourning under here, that you have been under disquieting Fears about, that have cost you many Tears and
many

The Books opened,

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many waking Hours, will then all appear blotted out, stand fully cancelled, never to be required, and what a sweet welcome Sight will this be !

(2.) At this great Opening your Names will be found written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Your Names shall be found written in Heaven, and you shall fully see that you are the Objects of free, special, differing and distinguishing Love, reaching from everlasting to everlasting ; and will not this be a blessed Sight ?

(3.) At this Opening, the Face of God and Christ shall open on you, never to shut in or go under any Cloud again for ever. Here the Saints are absent from the Lord, and the Lord is absent from them in regard of the Smiles of his Face ; but then they shall be for ever with him, 1 *Thess.* 4. 17.

(4.) At this Opening, Heaven shall open as an eternal Mansion for you ; Jesus will open at this Day all his Store-houses ; the eternal Kingdom, the eternal Weight of Glory, and the Fulness of Joy that is in the Presence of God, shall then open : All the unseen things that are prepared for those that love God, shall then open.

(5.) At

(5.) At this Day the Righteousness and Holiness of God's Ways towards you will open before you, and you shall see a most clear and full Commentary on that Promise, *All things shall work together for Good to them that love God*, Rom. 8. 28. All your Tears, Prayers, Sufferings, Patience, Layings out for God from first to last, shall at this Opening be found owned and crowned. Wherefore *Comfort one another with these Words*, 1 Thess. 4. 18.

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F I N I S.

Errat. Page 52. Line 5, 6. read *but they are*.

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